



Mashatu Game Reserve
Northern Tuli Game
Reserve
Tuli Block, Botswana

P.O. Box 26
Lentswe Le Moriti
Botswana

T +27 (31) 761 3440 (SA)
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reservations@mashatu.com

MASHATU GAME RESERVE

CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

2024

Mashatu Game Reserve's vision is to be a shining example of how to preserve and protect the sanctity of nature and achieve a balance with the communities that surround it. Through conservation, environmental, social and economic efforts, we strive to positively impact the sustainability of our reserve.

Environmental:

No animals are killed for human consumption. Mashatu is a sanctuary for wildlife and if there is any overpopulation, the animals move out of the area (because we are unfenced).

Firewood is bought from outside the reserve from farms or suppliers, so that all fallen trees or bush on Mashatu can remain to be formed into tiny ecosystems of insects and microorganisms.

To reduce the amount of waste generated by plastic water bottles, Mashatu has introduced a system whereby each guest is given a flask to refill and use to drink water. This has drastically reduced the number of plastic water bottles which would have ordinarily been used.

Mashatu has a central recycling plant at Merryhill for glass and tins which are either transported out of the reserve or utilized in building projects.

Mashatu is moving away from "thirsty gardens" where only natural grasses, bush and succulents and anything indigenous is being planted.

Mashatu moving its camps over to solar electricity; with Euphorbia Mashatu, Kolokolo Safari Home, Mashatu Tent Camp, Shalimpo and Tuli Safari Lodge all powered by solar energy. Within the next 2 years, we hope to have all our camps run on solar, as we have 95% rain-free days every year.

Mashatu only sun-dries laundry, to save electricity. Tumble dryers are only used as a last resort if it rains (a rare occurrence).

Along with safari drives, guests can opt for four other low-impact activities including walking, biking, visiting the underground hide or horse riding. These activities are 'light' on the land and help to minimise any negative human impacts on the environment. There are no other motorised activities or flying activities which could potentially startle the wildlife or contribute to noise pollution.

Mashatu is an unfenced reserve, meaning the animals can 'migrate' and move as they please. Ultimately, they chose to remain on the property because of the eight rivers and presence of water in this arid area.



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Social:

During the 12-month period of the Covid19 Lockdown (Apr'20 to Mar'21), Mashatu paid out more than BWP12 million in salaries and wages, retaining all staff members in the company's employ whilst the company was closed for commercial operations.

Outside of the public sector and Government, Mashatu is the largest employer in the Bobirwa District of Botswana. Mashatu currently employs 288 permanent employees (57% men and 43% women) with an annual payroll in excess of P23 million.

Ninety-eight percent of all employees are Botswana Citizens, of which 78% are from the Bobirwa District (which includes the six villages closest to the reserve). Eighty-two employees hold senior management positions, of which 59% are woman.

The average age of employees is 40 years old and average number of years in the employ of Mashatu is 8 years, with eighty-two employees having more than 10 years' service. Mashatu offers training to employees, believes in promotion from within, encourages growth and development of its employees within the group.

All our lodges are managed by Motswana (Citizens of Botswana), who all have more than 15 years' work experience in the industry.

Mashatu supports two basket weaving groups in Bobirwa i.e. the Tsatsi Le Eta Basketry Group (Mothlabaneng) and the Batlhani Women's Group (Lentswe Le Moriti), through the purchase of their woven products which they supply Mashatu on consignment and Mashatu sells for them in the curio shops at Euphorbia Mashatu, Mashatu Lodge and Tuli Safari Lodge Mashatu and Limpopo Valley Airfield; in the past 12 months they have supplied in excess of P90k in products, 70% of all sales go back to the women's groups.

Mashatu offers cultural village tours to guests, enabling them to experience the local culture through a uniquely immersive experience. Interacting with locals in the villages, witnessing how they skillfully craft traditional African items such as weaved baskets, and experiencing ancient rock painting and relics close by to the local villages. With each cultural tour, 50% of proceeds go to the local community.

Mashatu supports local seamstresses from the village of Mothlabaneng, called Moseshz Designs. They have made all the Mashatu chef aprons, waitress aprons and head dooks. These items are proudly worn by Mashatu employees. Earlier this year Mashatu contracted the same ladies for staff uniform alterations. They were also instrumental in assisting Mashatu with the production of new cushion covers for Mashatu Lodge; in the past 12 months they have supplied services over P50k to Mashatu.

In addition to the above Mashatu has an agreement with a fine jewellery supplier from Selebi-Phikwe – 88 Carate Street, to supply Mashatu with jewellery which is locally designed and manufactured here in Botswana in the Bobirwa District. Khumo, the owner, currently supplies Euphorbia Mashatu with consignment stock which is sold on her behalf.



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Within Bobirwa, Mashatu proudly supports the traditional dance and choir group, from Mothlabaneng, Dipitse Dia Raga CG, who are contracted in from time to time to entertain large groups of guests / for special occasions in Mashatu; for which they are paid between P2000 and P3000 each time, with transport and meals provided by Mashatu. In the last 12 months they have been contracted eight times.

Economic:

Mashatu supports its operation through the service centre hub of the reserve known as Merryhill, based within the reserve close to Pont Drift Border, which includes a “shop” with centralised stores, supplying food, beverages, housekeeping, and consumable items for sale to its employees (at cost), its camps and lodges, concessionaires, and other visitors to the greater Northern Tuli Game Reserve.

Merryhill, is also home to Mashatu Connect which provides the service of road transfers and flights to and from Mashatu, as well as the base for the operations, accounts, Botswana reservations and human resource departments. This service center provides a workshop and maintenance department servicing all the infrastructure and assets owned/managed by Mashatu.

Conservation levies contribute to Mashatu’s conservation and community efforts in funding projects through the Tuli Conservation Trust (www.tulitrust.org) and NOTUGRE (www.notugre.com) including anti-poaching and human wildlife conflict management, as well as conservation efforts within Mashatu e.g. going green – removal of power lines, converting to solar (which is all a work in progress at the moment, with five of our six commercial lodges converted to solar), water preservation and reticulation (currently a P5 million project), protecting iconic trees of Mashatu and more.

Employee welfare is of the utmost importance, with the Staff Health Care Fund created, to assist employees with medical expenses, not covered by the government or medical aid. As from 2024 \$5 of the \$20 conservation levies, will be allocated to the Mashatu Staff Health Care Fund, in addition to funding provided by the company and through donations.

Over and above the relationships Mashatu has with its local community to provide products and services to Mashatu, Mashatu proudly supports Botswana, by sourcing 90% of all supplies from within the country, in Bobonong, Selebi-Phikwe, Francistown and Gaborone – from food and beverages, to building supplies, and vehicle supplies – contributing around P72 million a year to Botswana’s GDP in purchases alone.

Conservation:

Conservation is a crucial part of our efforts to ensure the value of our greatest assets, namely wildlife and ecological diversity, are preserved and protected.

Power lines and other man-made structures - Since de-commissioning the power lines to Mashatu Tent Camp we have not had any wildlife electrification incidents.



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Borrow Pits - Three calcrete pits are currently being mined, to allow suitable access and proximity to areas of the Reserve, where road materials are required. These borrow pits still have a few years left, with large calcrete deposits. Monitoring of pits to ensure as little damage, as possible, is done to the environment is ongoing and reclamation will be done when required.

Roads - Road maintenance in the Reserve with current emphasis on the two major routes through the Reserve being the M1 and M2.

Weirs, dams, bridges and vleis - Several historic dams and weirs require repairs, as they have conservation value and act to replenishing underground water tables. It is however important that these remain seasonal, holding water during the rainy season, allowing natural movement of game into and out of central areas. We will, all going well and with funds permitting, be able to commence with a schedule to re-build weirs and cement causeways where required in the coming years.

Wildlife monitoring and spatial data systems - We have commenced using Hydra VIS to capture information within a smart system. The information captured by our Guides is useful to create data-based records; we will be able to see where the majority of sightings are made, and hopefully see what home ranges are for some of our more charismatic animal characters within the Reserve. This will add to our understanding of the area as well as their individual stories. We hope it will give us insight into their movements and interactions.

DWNP and private veterinarians - Our ongoing relations with DWNP and veterinarians in Botswana is good and we get great support, as and when we require assistance and services. The last incident at which intervention was required, took place in September 2023, when an adult lioness had to have a non-functional collar removed. A game capture operation was also successfully completed, with their assistance in September 2023.

Research and joint conservation projects - We are still exploring some joint projects that may allow Mashatu to add value, whilst playing an important part in young people's training, giving Botswana researchers and students opportunities to develop and grow.

Water management and conservation - Work has been done to cover some of the inspection points/holes along the main water feeder pipeline, as it posed a danger to wildlife. A full survey, by the Wellfields Group, on boreholes throughout Mashatu and its affiliated properties was completed. We have received comprehensive reports including consideration of required boreholes and supply infrastructure requirements, at an estimated total project cost of P5 million. This work is vital to the future supply and development, of this scarce but vital resource in our arid area, water security is a cornerstone of all development and functionality of the area's tourism and conservation management strategy. This water project is a current work in progress.

Erosion and rehabilitation - small erosion repairs have been made on the main road from Motlhabaneng into the Reserve to reduce some of the gully erosion that has been prevalent



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and ongoing. There is however a huge amount of erosion work and maintenance which needs to be done within the Reserve.

Alien plant control - A few areas and species have been earmarked for clearing and treatment over the next rainy season. We will contract day labourers from the surrounding areas to assist with clearing of problem species, this will be done under supervision, with the areas logged and then monitored.

Problem animal control – Mashatu's PAC unit is based out of Shalimpo, patrolling the Shashe and Limpopo Rivers to combat the illegal crossing of livestock into the Reserve/Botswana.

Protecting the iconic Trees of Mashatu - As part of Mashatu's ongoing efforts to protect tree diversity, and secure future seed banks, selected trees are being protected from over utilization by elephant. A variety of methods have been tested to protect trees from elephant damage, including rock packing around tree bases, placing bee hives next to trees and using chilli powder. Wrapping trees with diamond mesh fencing, up to a height of 3m has however given the best results. Fencing is monitored and every few years the fencing is loosened if required. During the fitment of the fence care is taken to ensure hollows being used as nesting, or shelter sites, can be left open so as not to affect the use of these by animals or birds.