

FROM **A**NGOLA
TO **Z**IMBABWE

Remarkable Heritage of Southern Africa



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A celebration of Southern Africa's rich and diverse heritage

Today, Southern Africa's diverse heritage faces a rising number of challenges which need to be addressed, including climate change, natural disasters, conflicts, urban development and tourism pressures.

The region currently has 42 World Heritage sites and 24 Living Heritage elements inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage and Intangible Cultural Heritage Lists, making it a vibrantly rich home to cultural diversity and human creativity. However, more work needs to be done to further recognize the value of Southern Africa's multifaceted heritage and enhance its protection in the face of increasing threats.

World Heritage sites in the region continue to play an essential role in the lives of the communities who live in and around them, as they constitute a source of pride, history and knowledge, a powerful driver of local economic development, and a vital resource for reconciliation, social integration and sustainable peace. Similarly, Southern Africa's living heritage elements provide communities with a strong sense of identity and help create a favorable environment for nurturing cultural diversity and human creativity.

Inviting you on a journey of discovery from Angola's Mbanza Kongo to Zimbabwe's Mbende Jerusalem dance, this publication provides a new outlook on the exceptional heritage that can be found in the countries of the Southern African Development Community region and emphasizes the need for its long-term protection and safeguarding as a shared responsibility.



"Since wars begin in the minds of men and women it is in the minds of men and women that the defences of peace must be constructed"



FROM **A**NGOLA
TO **Z**IMBABWE

Remarkable Heritage of Southern Africa



FOREWORD



Prof. Hubert Gijzen
Director, UNESCO Regional Office for
Southern Africa

Culture is who we are and what shapes our identity. Its diverse manifestations – from our cherished historic monuments and museums to traditional practices and contemporary artistic expressions – enrich our everyday lives in countless ways. At UNESCO, we are convinced that no development can be sustainable without a strong culture component.

For the past 50 years, the UNESCO World Heritage Convention has been one of the best-known instruments for heritage protection worldwide. It arose from a shared understanding that this precious heritage is often at risk and that it is the responsibility of the entire international community to ensure its protection, as the deterioration or disappearance of one country's heritage constitutes, in the words of the Convention, "a harmful impoverishment of the heritage of all the nations of the world". Far from being 'frozen' in their given state at the time of inscription, World Heritage sites continue to play an essential role in the lives of the communities who live in and around these sites, as they constitute a source of pride

and knowledge, a powerful driver of local economic development, and a vital resource for reconciliation and sustainable peace. The year 2022 marks the 50th anniversary of the adoption of the 1972 UNESCO World Heritage Convention.

For its part, the UNESCO Convention on the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, adopted in 2003, has been an essential tool for the safeguarding and transmission of those practices, expressions, knowledge and skills handed down from generation to generation. This living heritage provides communities with a sense of identity and nourishes cultural diversity and human creativity.

Regrettably, African World Heritage and living heritage elements face a number of challenges, whether in relation to climate change, natural disasters, conflict, urban development or tourism pressures. In addition, the global crisis linked to the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted lives, communities and livelihoods around the world, but in particular, it has deeply impacted the entire ecosystem of the cultural and heritage sector. At the same time, the crisis further revealed the role of culture and heritage as a major resource for resilience, connection and recovery. The year 2023 marks the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the 2003 UNESCO Convention on the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

“From Angola to Zimbabwe - Remarkable Heritage of Southern Africa” is the result of the collaborative effort between UNESCO and the African World Heritage Fund, a category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO. Following the launch of “A Glimpse of the World Heritage sites in Southern Africa” five years ago, this new publication intends to provide an outlook of the exceptional World Heritage sites and the rich living heritage elements that can be found in the countries of the Southern African Development Community region.

While celebrating the rich and diverse cultural and natural heritage of Southern Africa, this publication reminds us the importance of this heritage to people’s lives and to humanity at large. It also highlights that ensuring its long-term protection and safeguarding is our shared responsibility. I am confident that this publication will help in disseminating knowledge about World Heritage and living heritage in the region, and will contribute to their safeguarding for future generations.

I wish to thank UNESCO’s longstanding partners, whose support for our work in the field of heritage protection and safeguarding and in the promotion of sustainable tourism practices in contribution to the achievement of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union Agenda 2063 has been instrumental in bringing this publication to fruition.

Namib Sand Sea, Namibia © Radek/stock.adobe.com*

Culture is who we are and what shapes our identity. Its diverse manifestations – from our cherished historic monuments and museums to traditional practices and contemporary artistic expressions – enrich our everyday lives in countless ways.



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Director of the Publication: Prof. Hubert Gijzen

Coordination: Francisco Gómez Durán

Editorial Team: Mellisa Muchena and Rodney Bunhiko

Editorial Board: Albino Jopela, Pascall Taruvinga, Muhammad Juma Muhammad, Keiichi Julien Nakata Glenat, Yvette Kaboza, Malvin Masosonore and Mulekeni Ngulube.

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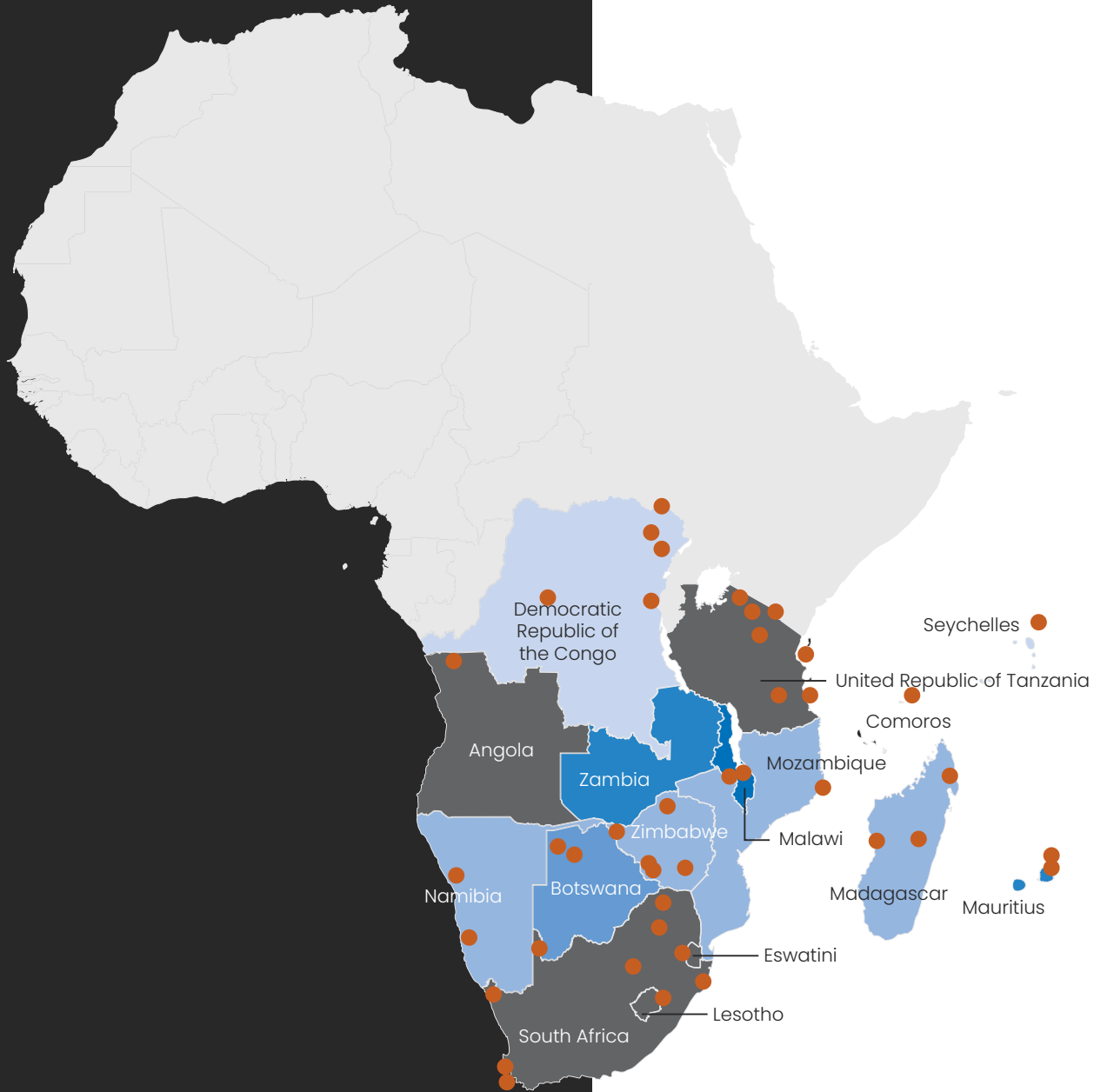
Living Heritage elements

COLOUR KEY

Countries

Number of living heritage elements

Malawi	Mauritius Zambia	Botswana	Madagascar Mozambique Namibia Zimbabwe	Democratic Republic of the Congo Seychelles
6	4	3	2	1



42

World Heritage sites



UNESCO

UNESCO is the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. It seeks to build peace through international cooperation in education, sciences and culture.

UNESCO's programmes contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals defined in the 2030 Agenda, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2015.

UNESCO was born in the aftermath of two world wars out of a simple but firm conviction: political and economic arrangements between states are not enough to build lasting peace. Reconciliation and development require stronger foundations, deeply rooted in societal interactions, and built upon intellectual and moral solidarity.

The organization develops educational tools to help people live as global citizens free of hate and intolerance and works to ensure that every child and every citizen has access to quality education. By promoting cultural heritage and the equal dignity of all cultures, UNESCO strengthens the bonds between nations. In addition, it fosters scientific programmes and policies as platforms for development and cooperation.

UNESCO stands up for freedom of expression, as a fundamental right and a key condition for democracy and development and in its role as a laboratory of ideas, it helps countries to adopt international standards and manages programmes that foster the free flow of ideas and the exchange of knowledge.

Seventy-five years after its foundation, UNESCO's mandate is more relevant than ever. Cultural diversity is under attack and new forms of intolerance, misinformation and threats to freedom of expression challenge peace and human rights. In response, UNESCO's duty remains to reaffirm the humanist missions of education, science and culture.



African World Heritage Fund

The African World Heritage Fund (AWHF) is an intergovernmental organization, which was created in 2006 to develop a strategy in response to challenges relating to the conservation and protection of natural and cultural heritage of outstanding universal value in Africa that supports African countries in implementing UNESCO's World Heritage Convention.

AWHF is registered as a Trust under South African law and was granted the status of Category 2 Centre under the auspices of UNESCO in 2009.

In partnership with African Member States that are party to the UNESCO World Heritage Convention, UNESCO, the African Union, and non governmental organizations, the AWHF focuses on addressing the under representation of African sites on the World Heritage List and the insufficient conservation and management of these sites.

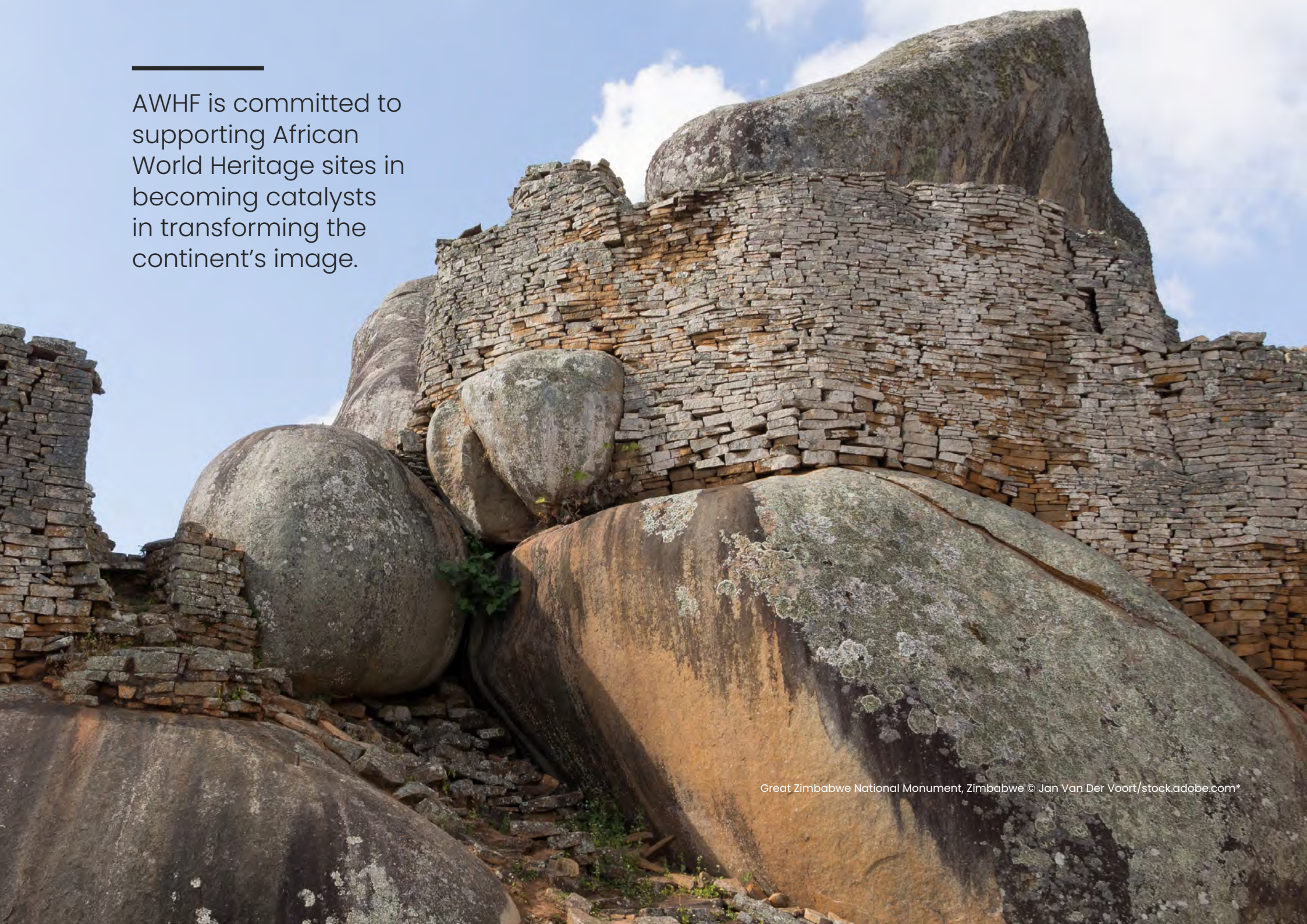
As such, AWHF provides support and assistance to: (i) identify and list African heritage sites on the World Heritage List; (ii) implement effective conservation and management strategies at World Heritage sites in Africa; (iii) rehabilitate sites inscribed on the World heritage List in Danger; (iv) build the capacities of heritage experts and site managers; and (v) involve local communities in decisions concerning their heritage and ensuring that tangible benefits accrue to them.

AWHF is committed to supporting African UNESCO World Heritage sites in becoming catalysts in transforming the continent's image, stimulating sustainable socio-economic development and contributing to the well-being of society through their effective and sustainable management.



For more information: <https://awhf.net>

AWHF is committed to supporting African World Heritage sites in becoming catalysts in transforming the continent's image.





For more information: <https://ich.unesco.org>

For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/africa/>

World Heritage and Living Heritage in Southern Africa

Heritage is our legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations. Our cultural and natural heritage are both irreplaceable sources of life and inspiration.

In 1972, with the adoption of the World Heritage Convention, the world's nations came together under the auspices of UNESCO to formally recognize and conserve heritage of value and importance not just to one community or country, but to all of humanity, both in the present and for future generations.

It was agreed that their loss would constitute an impoverishment of the world's shared heritage, and thus we must protect these places deemed to have Outstanding Universal Value.

To date, 194 countries, including all Southern African countries, have ratified the World Heritage Convention, thereby committing to identify and nominate properties on their national territory to be considered for inscription on the World Heritage List.

Once inscribed, countries are expected to protect the World Heritage values of the properties and periodically report on their state of conservation. So far, 42 sites from Southern Africa, have been inscribed by the World Heritage Committee on the World Heritage List, whereas 6 properties have been included in the List of World Heritage in Danger.

The term 'cultural heritage' has changed considerably in recent decades, partially owing to the standard-setting instruments developed by UNESCO. Cultural heritage does not end at monuments and collections of objects. It also includes traditions or living expressions inherited from our ancestors and passed on to our descendants, such as oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe, as well as the knowledge and skills relating to crafts.

Transmitted from generation to generation, intangible cultural heritage is constantly changing and evolving, enriched by interactions within and between communities and generations, adapting to changes in the socio economic and natural environment.

Safeguarding heritage and passing it on to future generations strengthens it and keeps it alive while allowing for it to change and adapt.

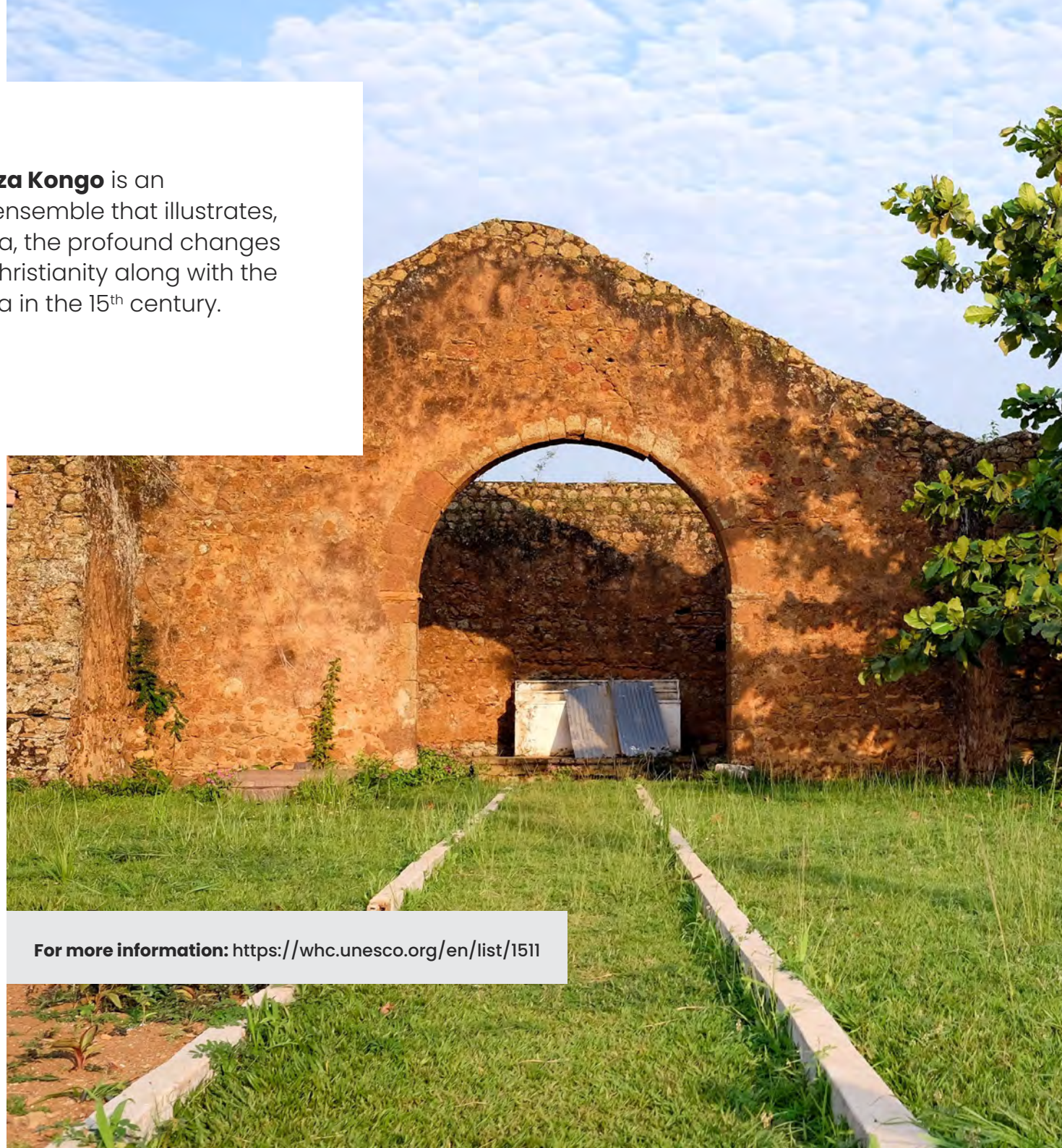
The Intangible Heritage Convention aims at the safeguarding of the living heritage of communities, groups and individuals everywhere in the world. So far, 180 countries, including 15 Southern African countries, have ratified the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention, thereby committing to take the necessary measures to safeguard the living heritage present in their territory through a community-based approach and, in particular, to support communities in identifying, defining and inventorying their intangible heritage.

To date, 24 elements practiced in Southern Africa have been inscribed by the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage on the Representative List, whereas 5 elements have been included in the Urgent Safeguarding List. The elements of intangible cultural heritage included in the present publication therefore constitute only a fragment of the diversity of practices that exist in the region.

The political and religious centre of **Mbanza Kongo** is an outstanding example of an architectural ensemble that illustrates, as nowhere else can in sub-Saharan Africa, the profound changes that emanated from the introduction of Christianity along with the arrival of the Portuguese into Central Africa in the 15th century.

#VisitMbanzaKongo

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2017



For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1511>



Mbanza Kongo, Angola © INPC / Joost De Raeymaeker

Jesuit College reflects the status given to Mbanza Kongo as a seat of learning and the place where, in 1624, the first catechism was written in the Kikongo language to be used to spread Christianity across the Kingdom.

MBANZA KONGO

VESTIGES OF THE CAPITAL OF THE FORMER KINGDOM OF KONGO

These events influenced not only religion but also trade and learning between Southern Africa and Europe, particularly Italy and Portugal. The Jesuit College reflects the status given to Mbanza Kongo as a seat of learning and the place where, in 1624, the first catechism was written in the Kikongo language to be used to spread Christianity across the Kingdom.

Mbanza Kongo, located on a plateau at an altitude of 570 m, was at the centre of the most important slave route to the Americas and the Caribbean. It stood as one of the largest kingdoms in Southern Africa from the 14th to 19th centuries, whose prosperity was at peak when the Portuguese arrived in the 15th Century. The site is characterized by a large urban area, including several churches, built from local materials, Portuguese stone buildings using European construction methods and techniques.

BOTSWANA

Situated northwest of Botswana, the **Okavango Delta** is endowed with permanent marshlands and seasonally flooded plains. This makes it one of the few major interior delta systems that do not flow into a sea or ocean, with a wetland system that is almost intact.

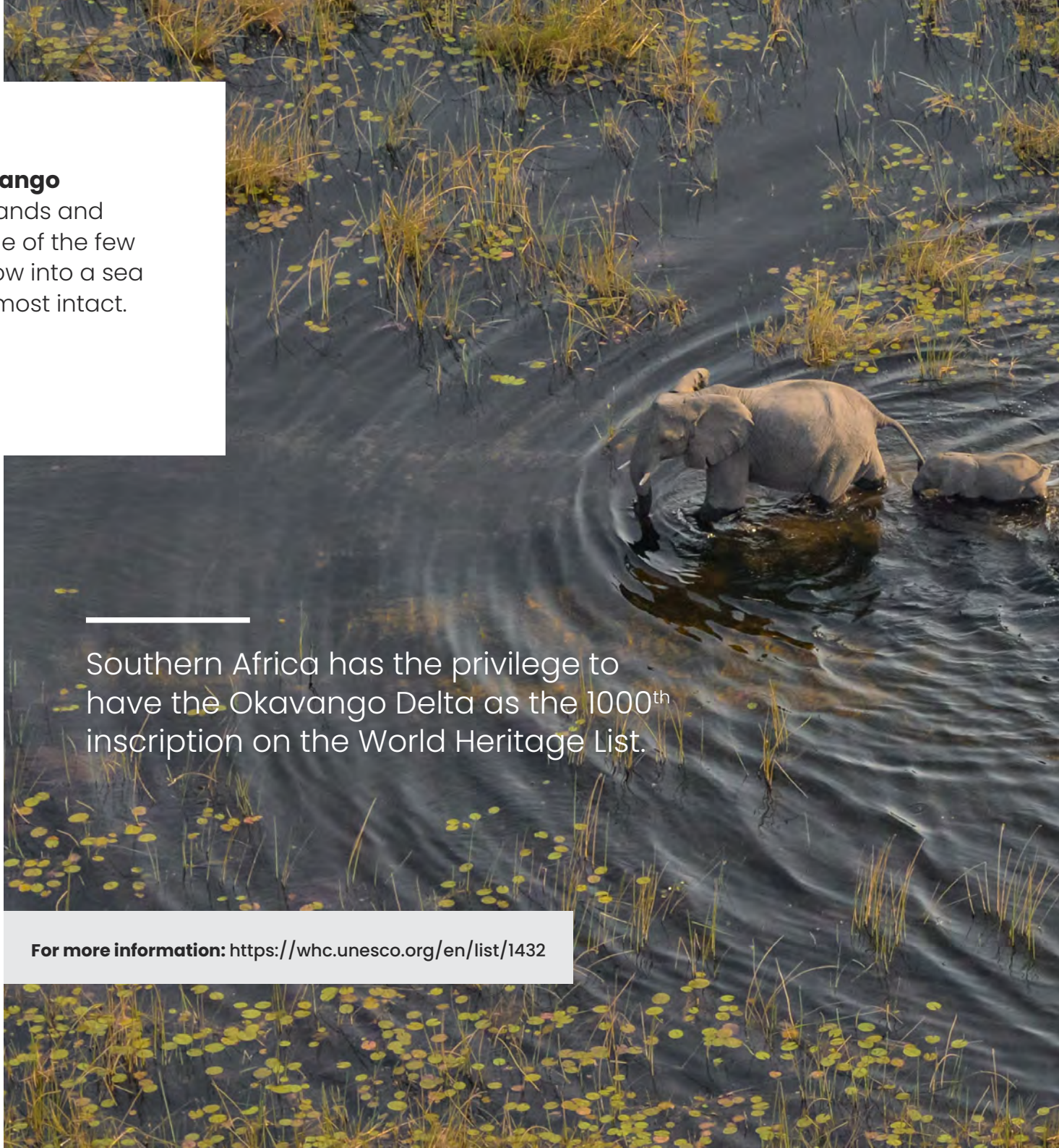
#VisitOkavangoDelta

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2014



Southern Africa has the privilege to have the Okavango Delta as the 1000th inscription on the World Heritage List.

For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1432>





OKAVANGO DELTA



Okavango Delta, Botswana © Leah/stock.adobe.com*

The Okavango Delta is Africa's largest delta - a drainage basin that converges into a lake or swamp - with permanent swamps covering approximately 6,000 km². Its crystal waters and dissolved nutrients transform the otherwise dry Kalahari Desert habitat into a scenic landscape of exceptional and rare outstanding natural beauty.

One of the unique characteristics of the site is the annual rains and flooding from the Okavango River, which occurs during the dry season, resulting in native plants and animals synchronizing their biological cycles with this pattern. The annual flood-tide revitalizes ecosystems and is a critical life force during the dry season in the area.

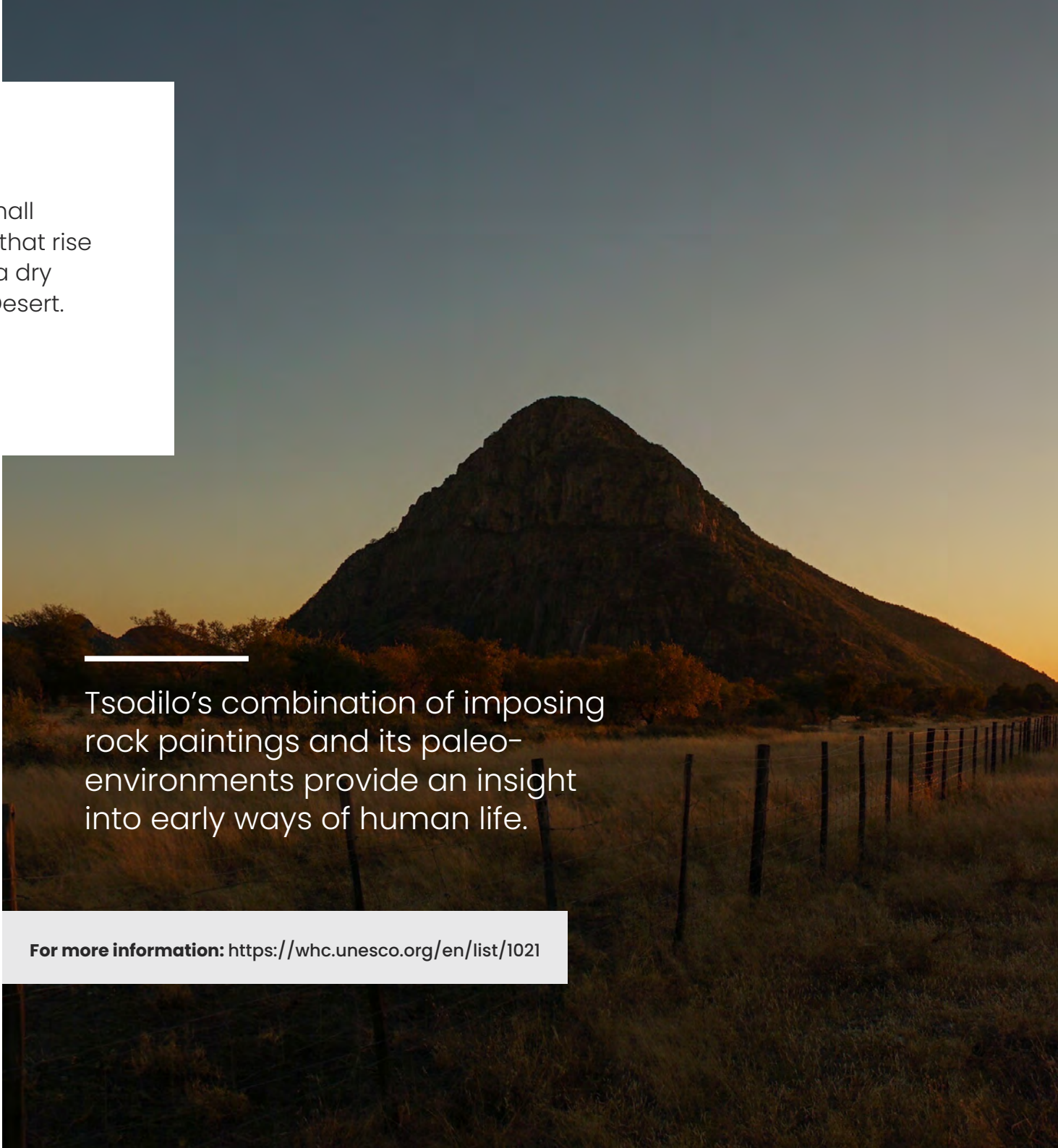
The delta constitutes an exceptional example of the interaction between the climatic, hydrological and biological processes, and is home to some of the world's most endangered large mammals: the cheetah, white and black rhinoceros, African wild dog and lions, as well as to a number of globally threatened species, including the world's largest population of elephants.

BOTSWANA

Located in northwest Botswana near the Namibian border, the **Tsodilo** hills are a small area of massive quartzite rock formations that rise from ancient sand dunes to the east and a dry fossil lake bed to the west in the Kalahari Desert.

#VisitTsodilo

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2001

A photograph of the Tsodilo hills in Botswana. The hills are dark, rounded rock formations silhouetted against a bright orange and yellow sunset sky. In the foreground, there is a grassy field with a wire fence running across it.

Tsodilo's combination of imposing rock paintings and its paleo-environments provide an insight into early ways of human life.

For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1021>



TSODILO

For over 100,000 years, Tsodilo has been visited and settled by humans. The Tsodilo outcrops have immense symbolic and religious significance for the human communities who continue to survive in this hostile environment, testifying to a symbiotic human-nature relationship spanning thousands of years.

Tsodilo's combination of imposing rock paintings and its paleo environment provide an insight into early ways of human life, literally painting an impression of how people interacted with their environment through space and time. The local Hambukushu and San communities revere Tsodilo Hills as a sacred cultural landscape, one that attracts pilgrimages from afar to conduct annual ceremonies.

Tsodilo, Botswana © Christopher /stock.adobe.com*

BOTSWANA

The **Dikopelo folk music of Bakgatla Ba Kgafela in Kgatleng District** involves vocal singing and dancing in a patterned choreography without musical instruments.

#VisitBotswana

Inscribed on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding in 2017



For more information: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/USL/dikopelo-folk-music-of-bakgatla-ba-kgafela-in-kgatleng-district-01290>



Reviving Dikopelo is a strategy to protect young people from social ills and promote positive messages among the community.

DIKOPELO FOLK MUSIC

OF BAKGATLA BA KGAFELA IN KGATLENG DISTRICT

The Dikopelo music practice involves vocal singing and dancing in a patterned choreography without musical instruments in which people from a particular area join together to sing as a choir. The element is practiced by men, women and children but is mostly dominated by Elders who, forming an informal Council of Advisors, transmit their skills to the younger generation. Dikopelo is a communal practice involving a shared vision of community life.

Dikopelo folk music, Botswana © Legae Digwaamaje/Department of Arts and Culture, Botswana, 2013*

BOTSWANA

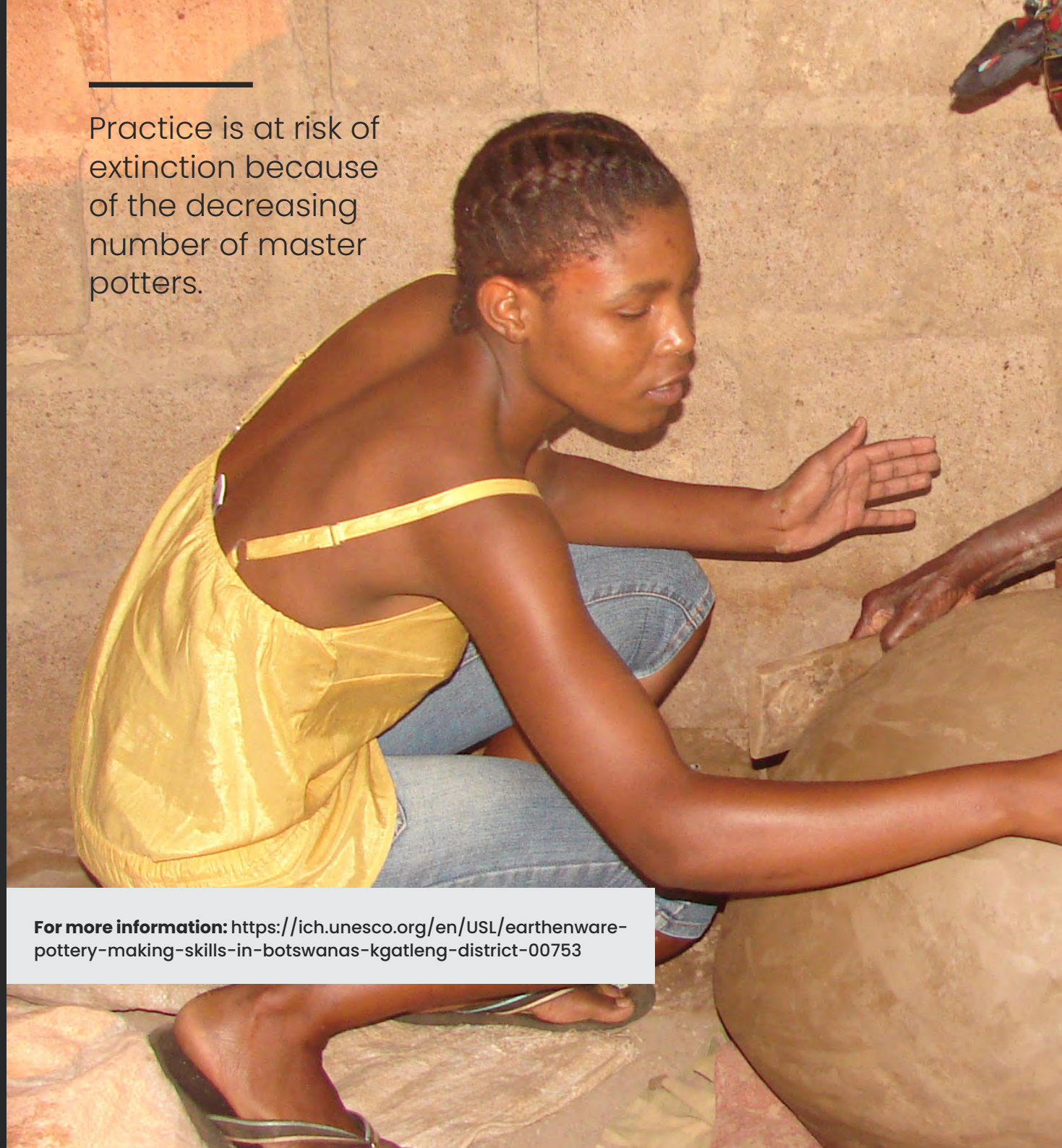
Earthenware pottery-making skills in Botswana's Kgatleng District are practised among the Bakgatla ba Kgafela community in southeastern Botswana.

#VisitBotswana

Inscribed on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding in 2012



Practice is at risk of extinction because of the decreasing number of master potters.



For more information: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/USL/earthenware-pottery-making-skills-in-botswanas-kgatleng-district-00753>

A woman wearing a colorful patterned headscarf and a plaid shawl is shown in profile, working on a large, rounded earthenware pot. She is using a wooden tool to shape the clay. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. The text 'EARTHENWARE POTTERY-MAKING SKILLS' is overlaid in large white letters on a black background.

EARTHENWARE POTTERY- MAKING SKILLS

IN BOTSWANA'S KGATLENG DISTRICT

The women potters use clay soil, weathered sandstone, iron oxide, cow dung, water, wood and grass to make pots of different forms, designs and styles that relate to the traditional practices and beliefs of the community. Pots are used for storing beer, fermenting sorghum meal, fetching water, cooking, ancestral worship and traditional healing rituals. When collecting the soils, the master potter communicates with the ancestors through meditation so that she will be guided to the ideal spot.

Earthenware pottery-making skills, Botswana © 2011, S.O. Rampete/Bakgatla ba Kgafela*

BOTSWANA

The **Seperu folkdance and associated practices** involve singing, dancing and sacred rituals that are highly significant in the lives of Veekuhane community members.

#VisitBotswana

Inscribed on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding in 2019



For more information: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/USL/seperufolkdance-and-associated-practices-01502>



Seperu folk dance, Botswana © Ishmael Ogaufi Otladisa and Veekuhane, Botswana, 2018

Currently, there are only 194 active practitioners, with twelve master practitioners, all of whom are over seventy years old.

SEPERU FOLK DANCE

AND ASSOCIATED PRACTICES

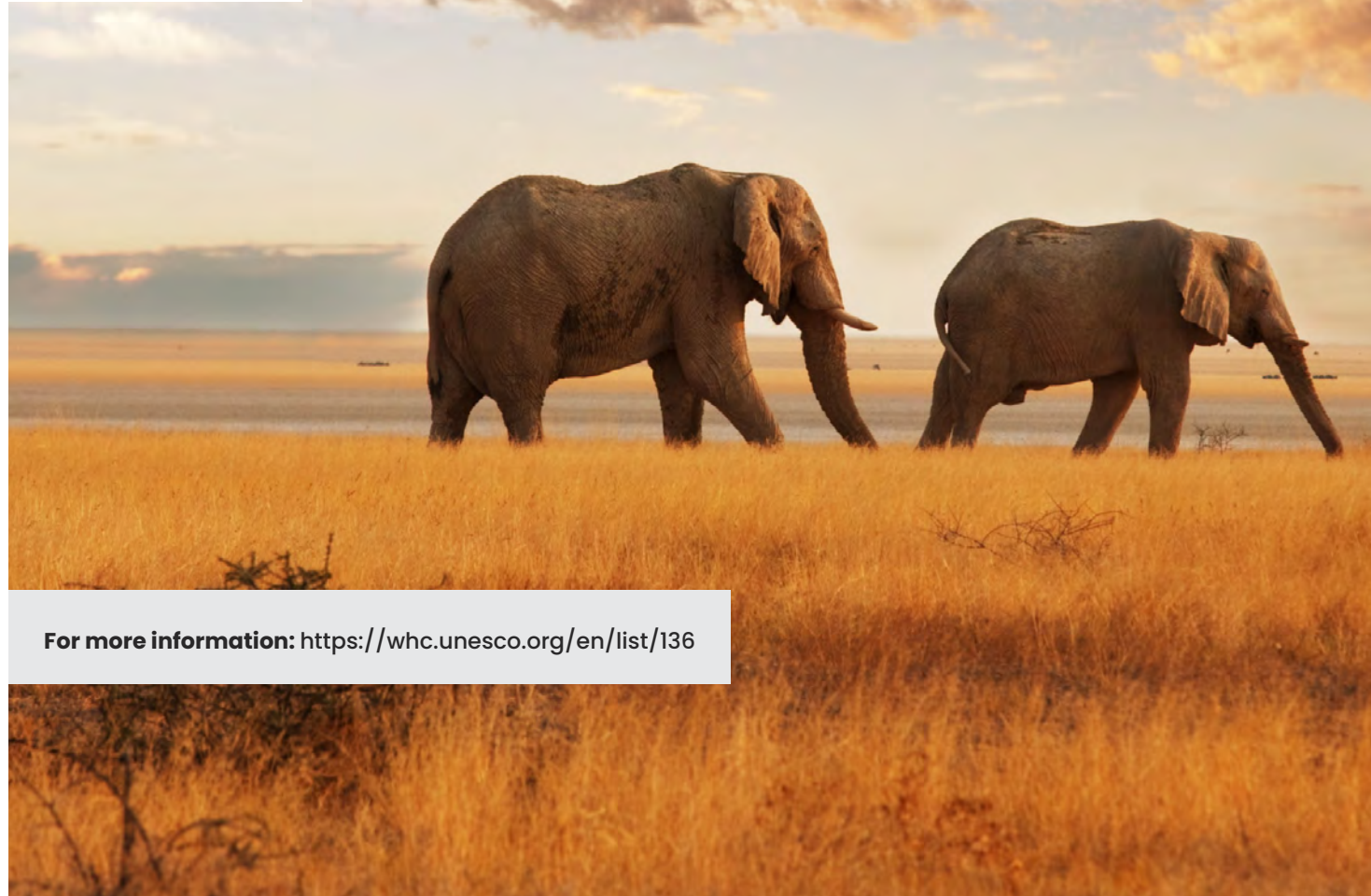
Seperu is a celebratory practice performed during ceremonies that mark important milestones in the community members' lives. In the dance the women form a horseshoe, while male dancers face the women at the end of this horseshoe. The lead dancer uses a fly whisk to direct and choose the female dancer, while other members of the group imitate the sounds of a male dove.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO


If you were to visit northeastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, diving deep in the transition zone between the dense tropical forests of the Congo Basin and the Guinean-Sudanian savanna, you would find yourself in the animal paradise of **Garamba National Park**.

#VisitGaramba

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1980



For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/136>



Characterized by vast grass savannas and woodlands, interspersed with gallery forests and marshland depressions, which make Garamba an extraordinary sanctuary.

GARAMBA NATIONAL PARK

It is characterized by vast grass savannas and woodlands, interspersed with gallery forests and marshland depressions, which make Garamba an extraordinary sanctuary, saturated by a unique mix of giant mammal spectacle. Garamba National Park is home to the world's last northern white rhinoceros population, the endemic subspecies of Congolese giraffe, hippopotamus, and a mixed population of elephants, combining both forest and bush elephants.

The Park contains a vast area scattered with a dense network of small permanent springs that support an exceptionally high plant productivity and herbivore biomass. This biomass translates to the presence of large herds of elephants, sometimes numbering more than 550, at certain periods of the year. Species typical to this forest include the bongo, the forest hog, the chimpanzee and other five species of small diurnal primates.

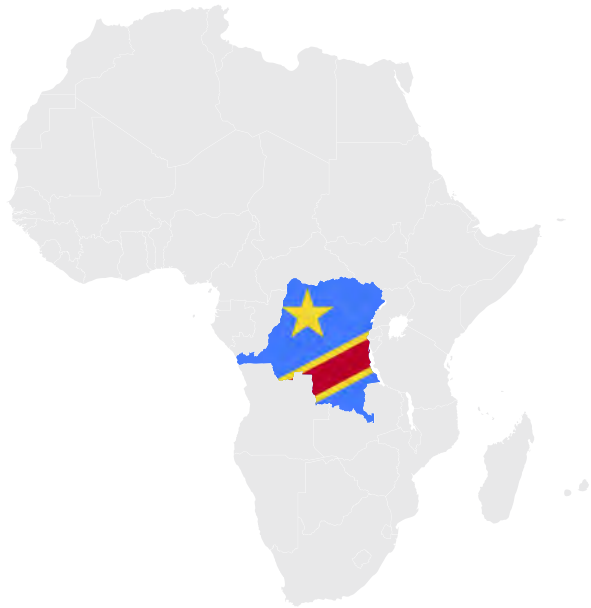
Garamba National Park, Democratic Republic of the Congo © Galyna Andrushko/stock.adobe.com*

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Straddling the Albertine Rift and the Congo Basin is the majestic **Kahuzi-Biega National Park**.

#VisitKahuziBiega

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1980



The National Park boasts of over 1,100 plant species inventoried in the highland zone, making it one of the richest regions of the World.

For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/137>





KAHUZI-BIEGA NATIONAL PARK

Dressed in flora and fauna of exceptional diversity, it boasts of over 1,100 plant species inventoried in the highland zone, making it one of the richest regions of the World.

Kahuzi-Biega National Park is an exceptional habitat for the protection of the rainforest and the endangered eastern lowland gorillas and many sub-species endemic to the country. Characteristic mammals of the central African forests also live in the Park, such as the bush elephant, the bush buffalo, the lowland gorilla, the giant forest hog and the bongo.

The Park has dense lowland rainforests and Afromontane forests, with bamboo forest, as well as some small areas of sub-alpine prairies and heather on Mounts Kahuzi and Biega, that rise up to 3,308 m and 2,790 m respectively. These forests are home to 349 species, including 42 endemic ones. The Park is one of the rare sites in sub-Saharan Africa where the flora and fauna transition from lowlands to highlands.


Kahuzi-Biega National Park, Democratic Republic of the Congo © asaf/stock.adobe.com*

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

The **Okapi Wildlife Reserve**, covering about one-fifth of the Ituri forest in the northeast of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, contains flora of outstanding diversity. It provides refuge to numerous endemic and threatened species, including one-sixth of the existing okapi population.

#VisitOkapi

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1996



The Okapi Wildlife Reserve is part of the Congo River basin, which is one of the largest drainage systems in Africa.

For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/718>



OKAPI WILDLIFE RESERVE

The Ituri forest is part of a Pleistocene refuge dominated by dense evergreen “Mau” and humid semi-evergreen forests, combined with swamp forests that grow alongside the waterways, and clearings referred to as “egos” and inselbergs by locals. The Okapi Wildlife Reserve is part of the Congo River basin, which is one of the largest drainage systems in Africa. The Reserve contains threatened species of primates and birds and about 5,000 of the estimated 30,000 okapi surviving in the wild. It also has some dramatic scenery, including waterfalls on the Ituri and Epulu Rivers. The Reserve is inhabited by traditional nomadic Mbuti and Efe hunters.

With its bio-geographical location, rich habitats and numerous rare species, absent in the adjacent low altitude forests, it is probable that the Ituri forest served as a refuge for the tropical rainforest during earlier and drier climatic periods. The Reserve contains 101 mammal species, 14 species of forest ungulates, 17 species of primates –the highest number for an African forest, including 7,500 chimpanzees–, the endemic aquatic and giant genet, and 376 species of documented birds. The Reserve also provides refuge to the largest population of forest elephants, the bongo, the dwarf antelope, the water chevrotain, the forest buffalo and the giant forest hog.

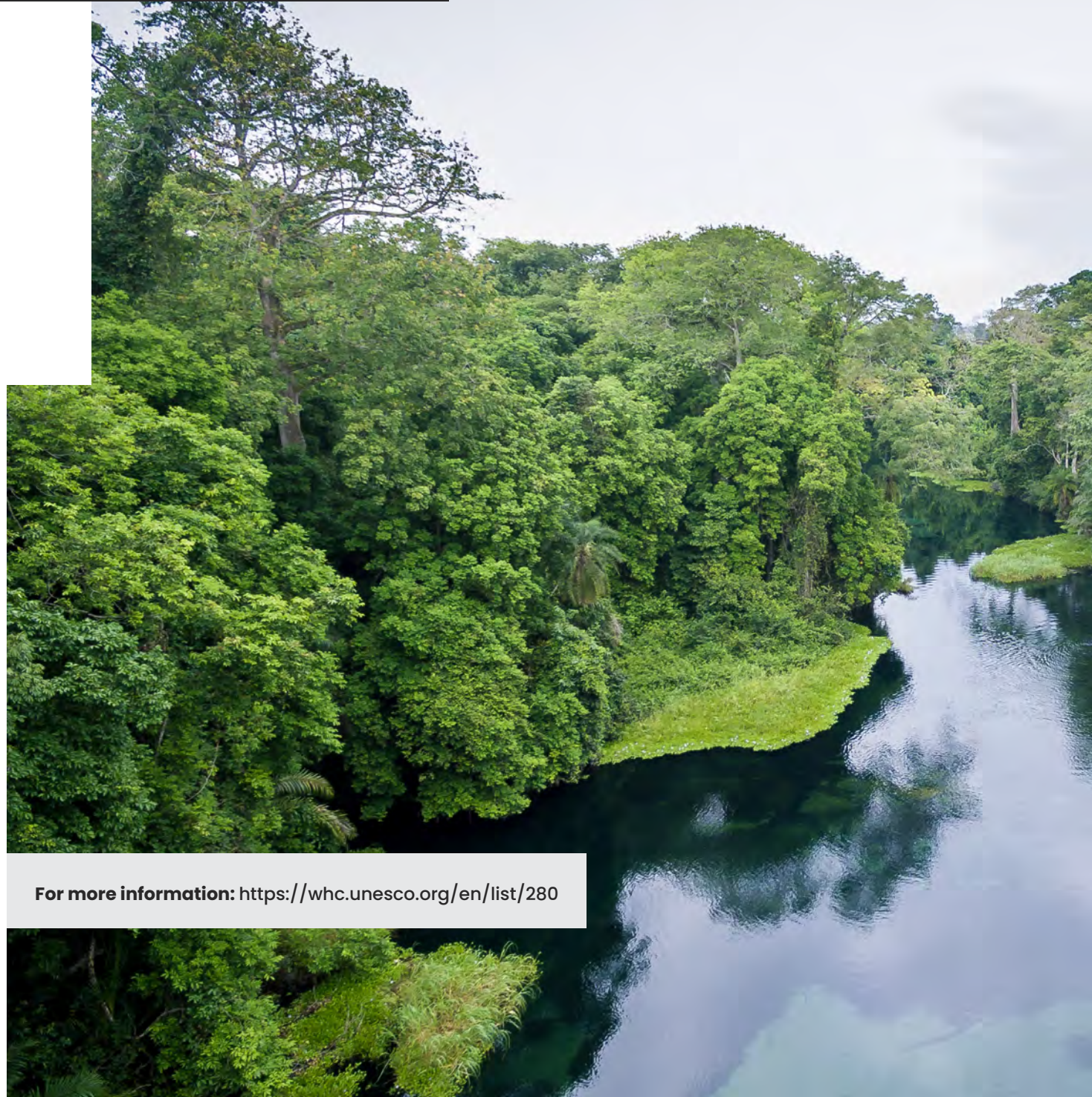
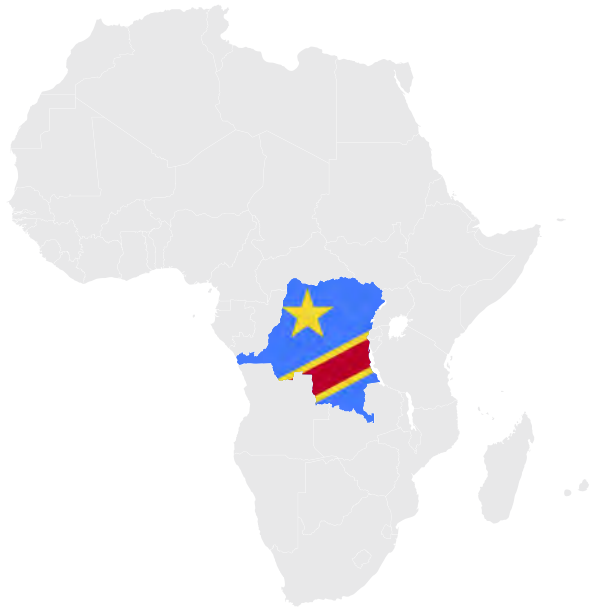
Okapi Wildlife Reserve, Democratic Republic of the Congo © Ji/stock.adobe.com*

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Situated in the heart of the central basin of the Congo River, the **Salonga National Park** is the largest protected area of dense rainforest on the African continent covering over 3 million hectares.

#VisitSalonga

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1984



For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/280>

Salonga National Park is
Africa's largest tropical
rainforest reserve.

SALONGA NATIONAL PARK

It represents one of the rarest existing habitats in Central Africa, one that is completely intact. Moreover, it comprises vast marshland areas and practically inaccessible virgin gallery forests. The plant and animal life in Salonga National Park constitute an example of biological evolution and the adaptation of life forms in a complex equatorial rainforest environment. The large size of the Park, its isolation and accessibility by water transport, ensures the continued possibility for evolution of species as well as biotic communities within the relatively undisturbed forest.

The Salonga National Park constitutes the habitat of numerous threatened species such as the pygmy chimpanzee or Bonobo, the bush elephant, the Congo peacock and the African slender-snouted or 'false' crocodile. All these habitats play a fundamental role in climate regulation and carbon sequestration in the area.

Salonga National Park, Democratic Republic of the Congo © Antoinee/stock.adobe.com*

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Virunga National Park, located in the centre of the Albertine Rift of the Great Rift Valley, exhibits an exceptional chain of active volcanoes and a rich diversity of habitats that surpass those of any other African park.

#VisitVirunga

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1979



Virunga National Park, Democratic Republic of the Congo © DARIO/stock.adobe.com*



For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/63>

Virunga National Park is unique with its active chain of volcanoes and rich diversity of habitats that surpass those of any other African park.

VIRUNGA NATIONAL PARK

Virunga National Park, covering an area of 790,000 hectares, offers the most spectacular mountain landscapes in Africa. For instance, Mount Rwenzori, with its jagged reliefs and snowy summits, cliffs and steep valleys and the volcanoes of the Virunga massif covered with afro-alpine vegetation and their slopes covered by dense forests are places of exceptional natural beauty.

The eight volcanoes that comprise the Virunga massif, which erupt at regular intervals every few years, constitute the dominant land features of this outstanding landscape, along with other several spectacular panoramas, like the eroded valleys in the Sinda and Ishango regions. Additionally, the Park contains important concentrations of wildlife, notably elephants, buffalos and Thomas cobs, and the largest concentration of hippopotamuses in Africa, with some 20,000 individuals concentrated on the banks of Lake Edward and along the Rwindi, Rutshuru and Semliki Rivers.

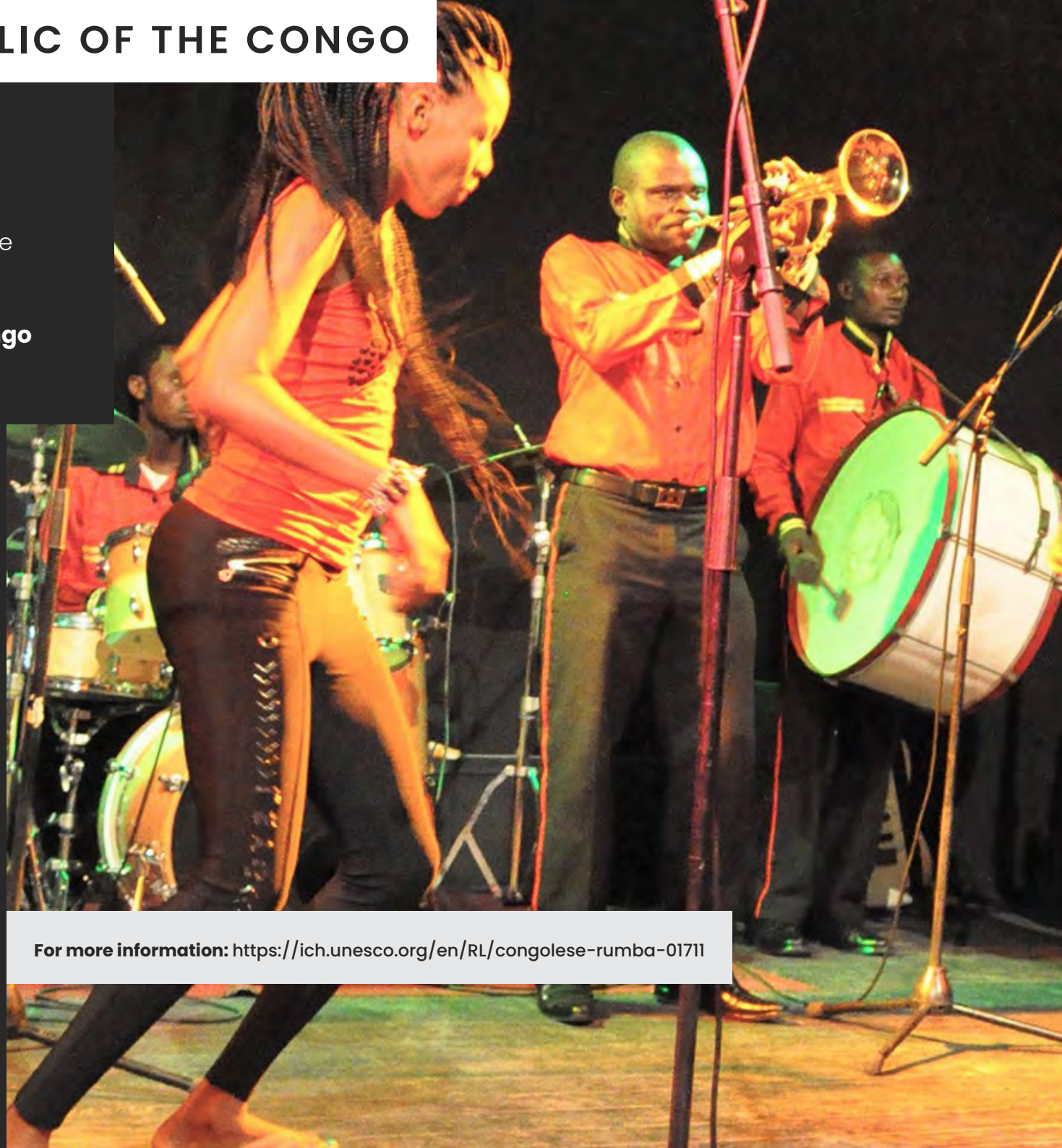
More than 2,000 premier plant species have been identified, of which 10 per cent are endemic to the Albertine Rift. Furthermore, the Rift also contains more endemic vertebrate species than any other region of the African continent, including 218 mammal species, 706 bird species, 109 reptile species and 78 amphibian species. It also serves as refuge to 22 primate species, of which three are the great apes: the mountain gorilla, the eastern plain gorilla and the eastern chimpanzee -with a third of the world population of mountain gorillas.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Congolese rumba is a musical genre and a dance common in urban areas of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Republic of the Congo.

#VisitTheDemocraticRepublicof the Congo

Inscribed on the Representative
List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage
of Humanity in 2021



For more information: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/congolese-rumba-01711>



CONGOLESE RUMBA

The rumba is considered an essential and representative part of the identity of Congolese people.

Congolese rumba, Democratic Republic of the Congo © Etienne KOKOLO, 2018*

Generally danced by a male–female couple, it is a multicultural form of expression originating from an ancient dance called nkumba (meaning ‘waist’ in Kikongo). The rumba is used for celebration and mourning, in private, public and religious spaces. It is performed by professional and amateur orchestras, choirs, dancers and individual musicians, and women have played a predominant role in the development of religious and romantic styles.

The tradition of Congolese rumba is passed down to younger generations through neighbourhood clubs, formal training schools and community organisations. The rumba also plays an important economic role, as orchestras are increasingly developing cultural entrepreneurship aimed at reducing poverty. It is considered an essential and representative part of the identity of Congolese people and its diaspora.

LESOTHO AND SOUTH AFRICA

The **Maloti-Drakensberg Park** is a transnational site spanning the border between Lesotho and South Africa. The transboundary site is composed of the Sehlabathebe National Park (6,500 hectares) in Lesotho and the uKhahlamba Drakensberg Park (242,813 hectares) in South Africa.

#VisitMalotiDrakensberg

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2000



The site has exceptional natural beauty in its soaring basaltic buttresses, incisive dramatic cutbacks and golden sandstone ramparts.



For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/985>

MALOTI- DRAKENSBERG PARK



Maloti-Drakensberg Park, Lesotho © Nadine/stock.adobe.com*

The site has exceptional natural beauty in its soaring basaltic buttresses, incisive dramatic cutbacks and golden sandstone ramparts, as well as visually spectacular sculptured arches, caves, cliffs, pillars and rock pools. The Park harbours endangered species such as the Cape vulture, the bearded vulture and the Maloti minnow, a critically endangered fish species found only in this Park.

The Maloti-Drakensberg Park is renowned for its wealth of rock paintings made by the San communities over a period of 4,000 years. Approximately 35,000 individual images within 690 rock art sites depict animals, hunting scenes and the spiritual life of the San people, epitomizing their cosmology and beliefs.

The site provides a vital refuge for more than 250 endemic plant species including extensive high-altitude wetlands 2,750 m above sea level.

MADAGASCAR

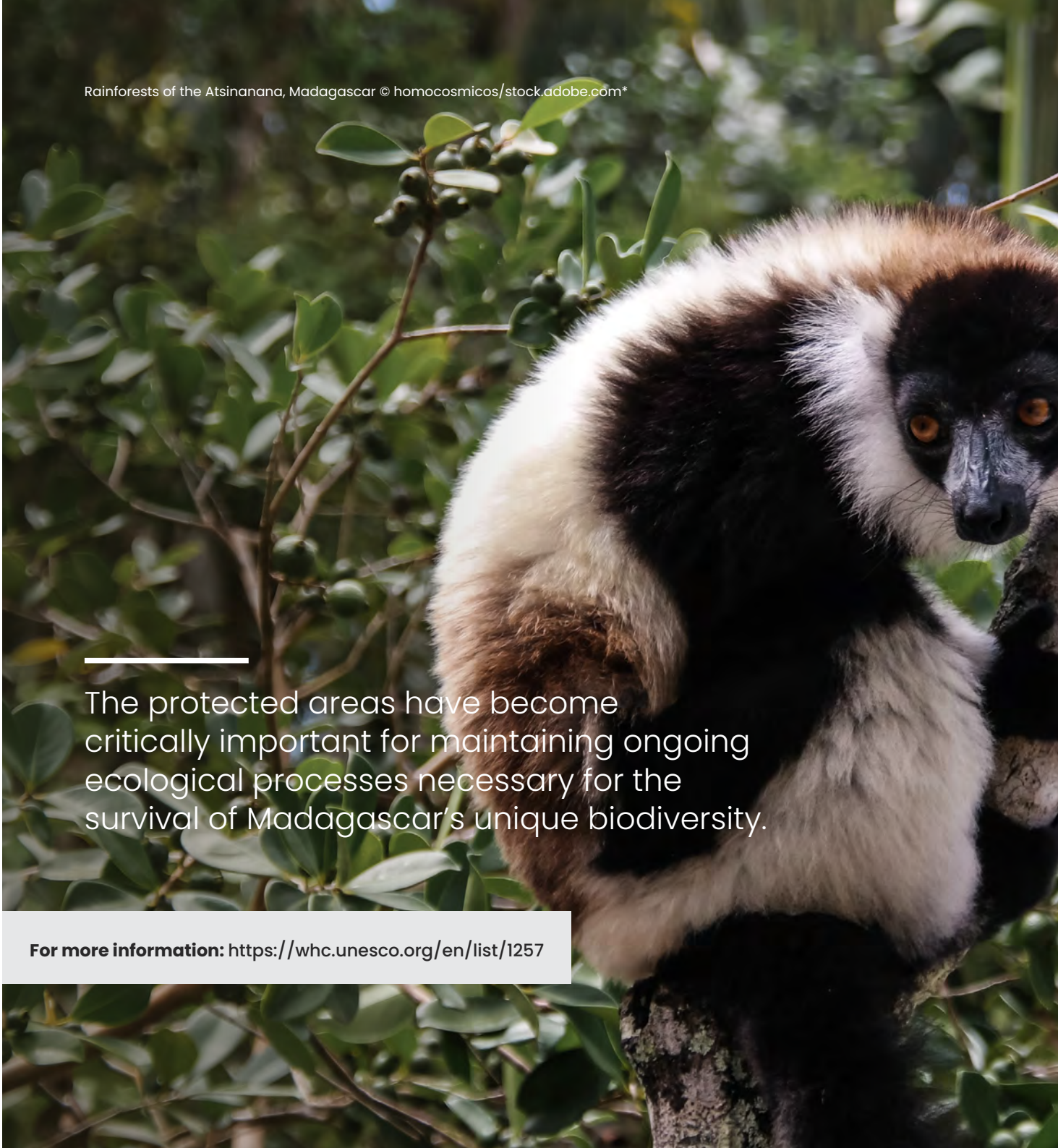
The **Rainforests of the Atsinanana** contain globally outstanding biodiversity and have an exceptional proportion of endemic plant and animal species.

#VisitAtsinanana

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2007



Rainforests of the Atsinanana, Madagascar © homocosmicos/stock.adobe.com*

A close-up photograph of a lemur, likely a Haplorhina, sitting on a tree branch. The lemur has a black face, orange eyes, and a body with black and white fur. It is surrounded by dense green foliage.

The protected areas have become critically important for maintaining ongoing ecological processes necessary for the survival of Madagascar's unique biodiversity.

For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1257>



RAINFORESTS OF THE ATSINANANA

The Rainforests of the Atsinanana comprise six components distributed along the eastern part of Madagascar. The country, which is the world's fourth largest island, has been separated from all other land masses for at least 60 to 80 million years, and most of its plant and animal life has thus evolved in isolation.

The Atsinanana are relict forests, largely associated with steeper terrain along the eastern escarpment and mountains of Madagascar. The protected areas have become critically important for maintaining ongoing ecological processes necessary for the survival of Madagascar's unique biodiversity reflected in its geological history and geographic placement.

The site contains globally outstanding biodiversity and has an exceptional proportion of endemic plant and animal species, ranging from approximately 80 to 90 per cent for all groups. It comprises a representative selection of the most important habitats of the unique rainforest fauna and flora of Madagascar, a country recognized by its "megadiversity". The property is home to all five families of Malagasy primates, all endemic lemur families, seven endemic rodents, six endemic carnivores, as well as several species of bats. With only 8.5 per cent of its original forests in place, the property plays an important role in the protection of this remaining habitat in Eastern Madagascar from deforestation.

MADAGASCAR

The **Royal Hill of Ambohimanga** constitutes an exceptional witness to the civilisation that developed in the 'Hautes Terres Centrales' in Madagascar between the 15th and 19th centuries.

#VisitAmbohimanga

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2001



Royal Hill of Ambohimanga, Madagascar © Dennis Waterhouse/Corbis

For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/950>



An eminent example of an architectural ensemble and cultural landscape with recognizable traditional Malagasy and European architectural styles.

ROYAL HILL OF AMBOHIMANGA



It is testimony to the cultural and spiritual traditions, including the cult of kings and ancestors which were closely associated with the site. The Royal Hill of Ambohimanga, a burial ground for its sovereigns, still stands today at the centre for Malagasy religious practices and constitutes a living memory of the traditional religion.

The site comprises a system of fortifications with a series of ditches and fourteen fortified stone gateways, two palaces and a small pavilion, an “ox pit”, two sacred basins and four royal tombs. The Royal Hill of Ambohimanga is an eminent example of an architectural ensemble (the Rava) and cultural landscape (wood, sacred fountain and lake) with recognizable traditional Malagasy and European architectural styles that bear witness to the diverse political phases in Madagascar’s history.

The landscape of the Royal Hill of Ambohimanga is associated with important historic events, such as the unification of Madagascar, traditions and beliefs such as ancestor worship.

MADAGASCAR

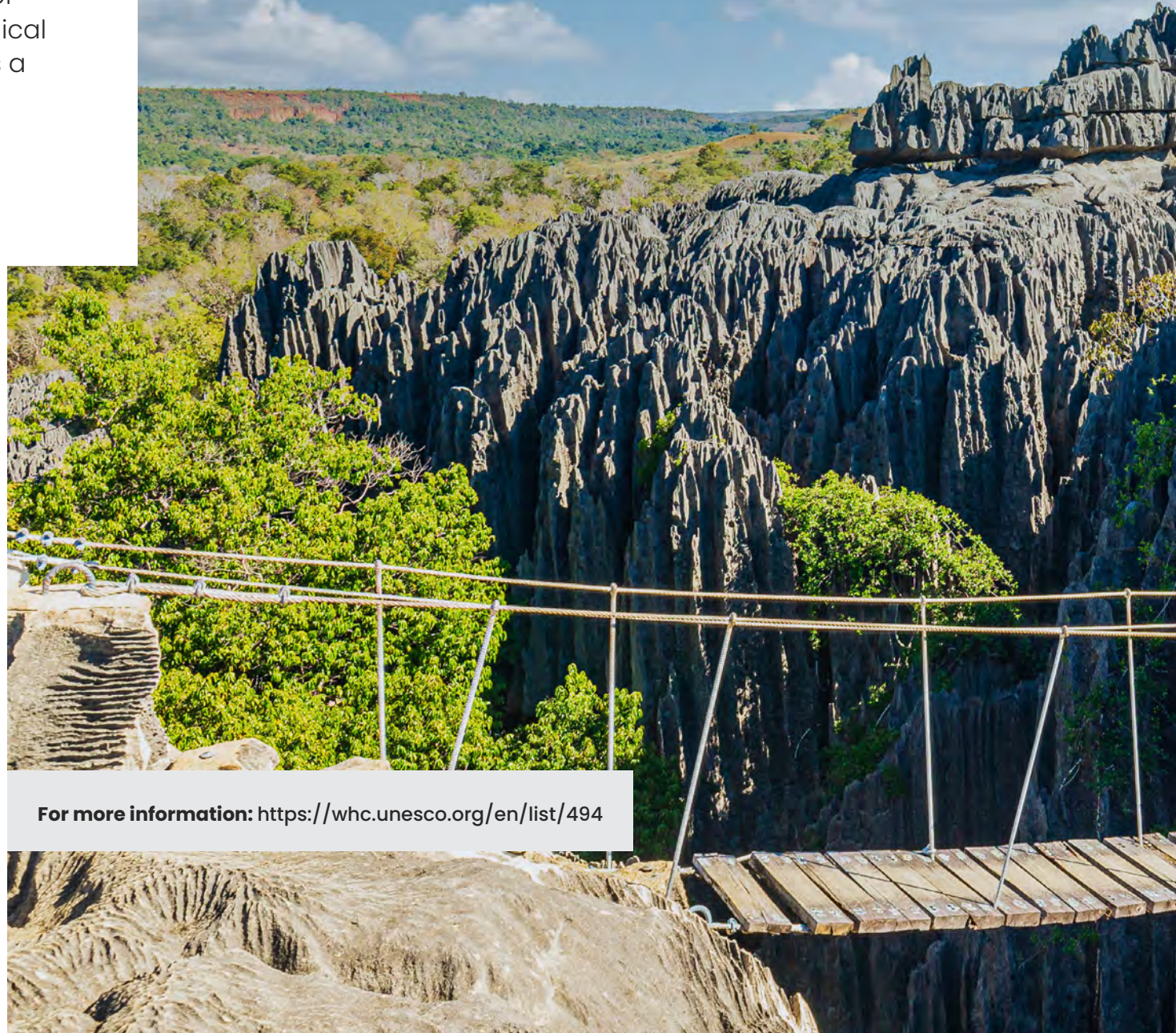
The **Tsingy de Bemaraha Strict Nature Reserve**, located in the central west part of Madagascar, presents remarkable geological phenomena of exceptional beauty across a total area of 152,000 hectares.

#VisitTsingyDeBemaraha

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1990



The limestone plateau forms an unusual feature of outstanding beauty.



For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/494>




TSINGY DE BEMARAHA

STRICT NATIONAL RESERVE

They include karstic scenery with a highly dissected limestone massif, crossed by a deep river gorge delineating a forest of sharp stones with high limestone pinnacles rising up to 100 m, offering a grandiose, spectacular natural landscape. The Tsingy of the limestone plateau forms an unusual feature of outstanding beauty, created by the effect of the shades of forest green on metallic reflections of the grey karst "bristles".

The Reserve contains communities of rare and threatened animal species and has excellent examples of principal types of ecosystem from rainforest habitats to very dry ones that exhibit exceptional and spectacular adaptation and insular characteristics.



Tsingy de Bemaraha, Madagascar © Chr. Offenberg/stock.adobe.com*

MADAGASCAR

Malagasy kabary is a poeticized speech performed in front of an audience. It is highly structured and consists of proverbs, maxims, rhetorical figures and wordplay.

#VisitMadagascar

Inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2021



Malagasy Kabary, Madagascar
© Fikambanan'ny Mpikabary
Malagasy, FIMPIMA, 2015*

For more information: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/malagasy-kabary-the-malagasy-oratorical-art-01741>



Viewed as a means of strengthening relationships between groups and communities, creating an atmosphere of sharing and cohesion.

MALAGASY KABARY,

THE MALAGASY ORATORICAL ART

The ritualistic style of speech was originally used by leaders to inform the community about social life and administration. Over time, communities started using it to communicate and for social events. It thus became inseparable from social life in Madagascar, used for festivities, funerals, official ceremonies and popular events. Its function is to express values and thoughts that give collective meaning to material facts.

In practice, Malagasy kabary takes place as a conventional dialogue, usually involving two orators, or mpikabary, in front of a gathering. It can last several hours, but in certain circumstances (such as during funerals), the structure is simplified to last around ten minutes. Although traditionally performed by older, elite men, today it is increasingly performed by young people and women. At the family level, it contributes to cohesion when performed at meetings where all generations are present and partake in the performance.

MADAGASCAR

The Zafimaniry community is the sole remaining repository of a unique woodcraft culture previously widespread on the island.

#VisitMadagascar

Inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2008 (originally proclaimed in 2003)



Woodcrafting knowledge of the Zafimaniry, Madagascar © michel BORDIEU/adobe.stock.com*

For more information: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/woodcraftingknowledge-of-the-zafimaniry-00080>



WOODCRAFTING KNOWLEDGE OF THE ZAFIMANIRY

In the 18th century, the Zafimaniry settled in the remote wooded region of southeast Madagascar, seeking refuge from the deforestation that was ravaging much of Madagascar at that time. Today, approximately 25,000 Zafimaniry live in some one hundred villages and hamlets scattered in the highlands of this region. For generations, Zafimaniry foresters, carpenters and craftworkers have developed a body of practical knowledge and skills revolving around wood. This craft tradition bears witness to the central role of this material in all aspects of life and death.

Zafimaniry proficiency in forestry and wood sculpting can be seen in constructions and everyday objects.

MALAWI

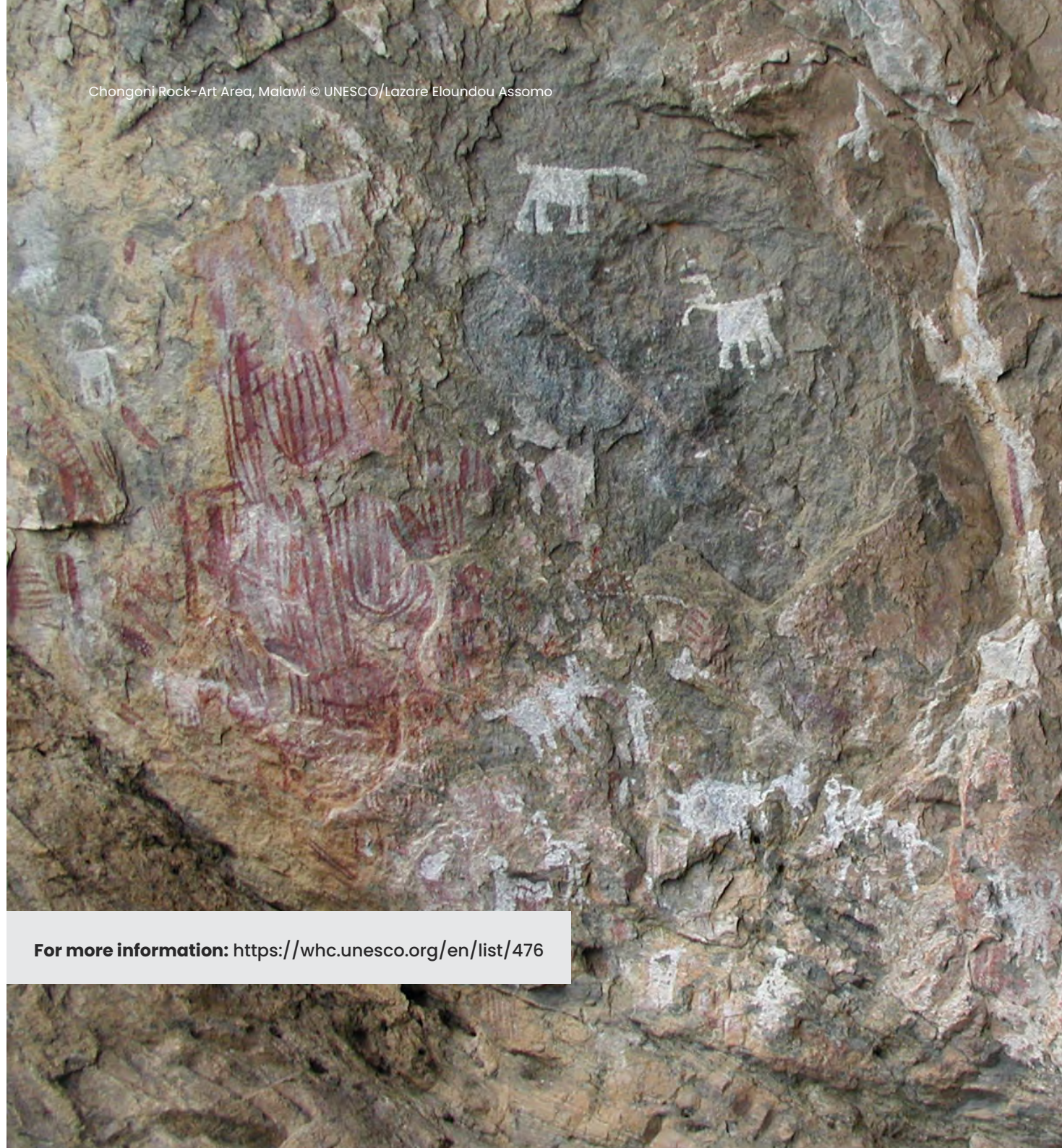
The **Chongoni Rock-Art Area** is situated within a cluster of forested granite hills in the central Malawian plateau, covering an area of approximately 125 km².

#VisitChongoni


Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2006



Chongoni Rock-Art Area, Malawi © UNESCO/Lazare Eloundou Assomo




For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/476>



The rock art of Chongoni reflects cultural practices, history and traditions of the peoples of the Malawi plateau, including the transition from a hunter-gatherer society to the advent of agriculture and animal domestication.

CHONGONI ROCK-ART AREA



With its 127 rock art sites, it is the richest concentration of rock art in Southern Africa. The rock art of Chongoni reflects cultural practices, history and traditions of the peoples of the Malawi plateau, including the transition from a hunter-gatherer society to the advent of agriculture and animal domestication, the subsequent Ngoni invasion of the Chewa people, and the arrival of European settlers.

The rock art bears testimony to an ancient landscape around the Chongoni hills, which are associated with the celebration of traditional and religious ceremonies, Chewa rainmaking ceremonies and funerary rites, and contemporary cultural practices of the Nyau, a secret society of the Chewa.

MALAWI

Located at the southern end of the great expanse of **Lake Malawi**, the site is an area of exceptional natural beauty carved with its islands and clear waters set against the background of the Great African Rift Valley escarpment.

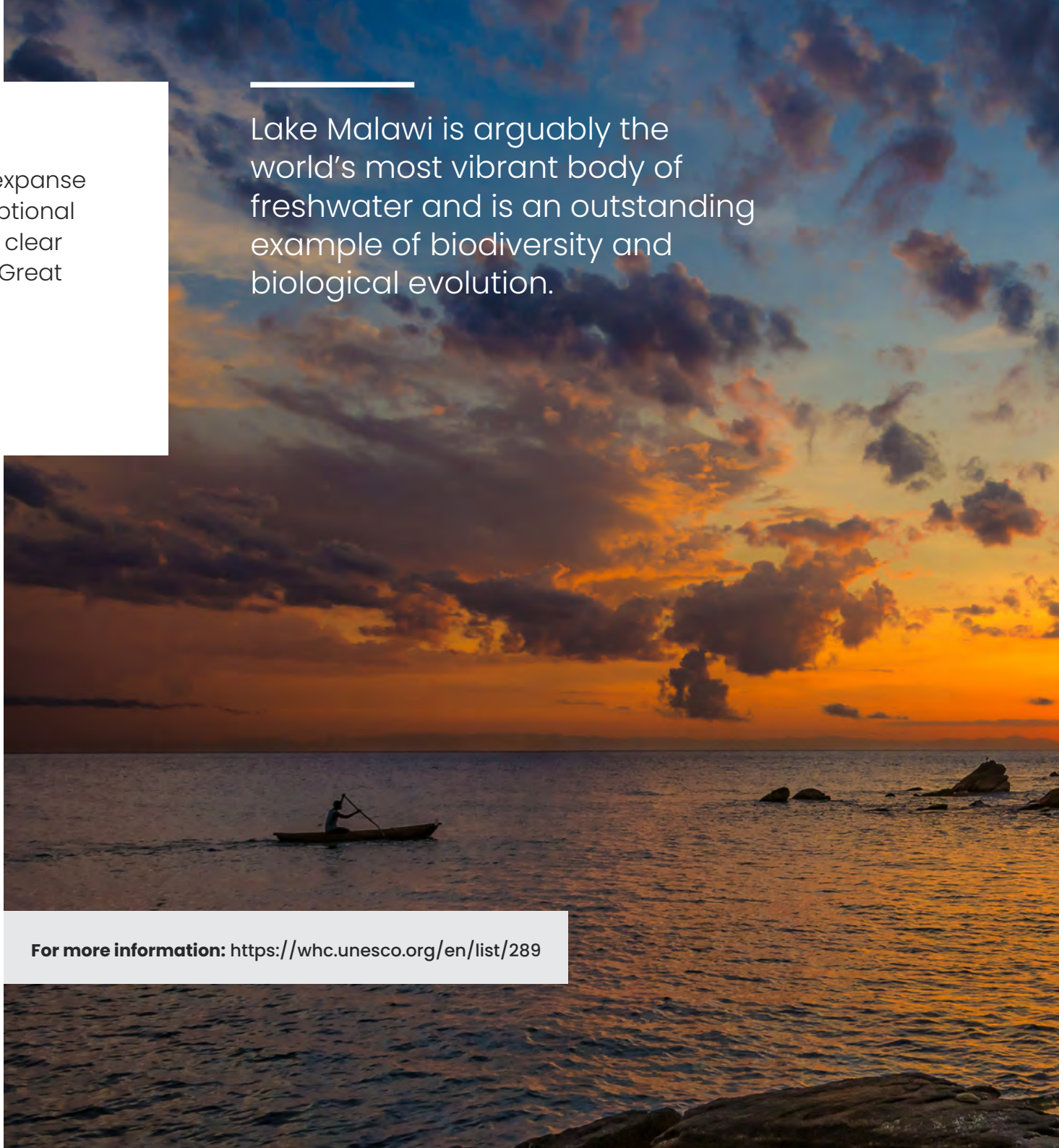
#VisitLakeMalawi

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1984



Lake Malawi is arguably the world's most vibrant body of freshwater and is an outstanding example of biodiversity and biological evolution.

For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/289>



The image shows a sunset over Lake Malawi. The sky is filled with dark, dramatic clouds, with a bright orange and yellow glow from the setting sun. The water of the lake is dark blue, reflecting the light from the sky. In the foreground, there are large, dark, jagged rocks along the shoreline. The overall mood is serene and majestic.

LAKE MALAWI NATIONAL PARK

Lake Malawi's habitat varies from rocky shorelines to sandy beaches and from wooded hillsides to swamps and lagoons. It is arguably the world's most vibrant body of freshwater and is an outstanding example of biodiversity and biological evolution.

Adaptive radiation and speciation, a process in which organisms diversify rapidly from an ancestral species into a multitude of new forms, are particularly noteworthy in the small, brightly colored rocky-shore rockfish, known locally as mbuna. All but five of over 350 species of mbuna are endemic to Lake Malawi and are represented in the park. Lake Malawi's cichlids are considered of equal value to science as the finches of the Galapagos Islands remarked on by Charles Darwin or the honeycreepers of Hawaii.

Lake Malawi National Park is home to some 1,000 species of fish, which is considered the largest number of fish species of any lake in the world. The site is also rich in other fauna, including mammals, birds and reptiles.

Lake Malawi, Malawi © Pius/stock.adobe.com*

MALAWI AND ZIMBABWE

The **Mbira/Sansi** produces a fluid percussive sound considered to be mystic, tranquil and enchanting.

#VisitMalawi

#VisitZimbabwe

Inscribed on the Representative List of
Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in
2020



For more information: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/art-of-crafting-and-playing-mbira-sansi-the-finger-plucking-traditional-musical-instrument-in-malawi-and-zimbabwe-01541>



The Mbira/Sansi instrument acts as a 'weapon' for condemning violence and other societal ills.

ART OF CRAFTING AND PLAYING

MBIRA/SANSI

THE FINGER-PLUCKING TRADITIONAL MUSICAL INSTRUMENT

The art of crafting and playing Mbira/Sansi, plays a key role in the communities concerned. The basic Mbira/Sansi instrument consists of a wooden board with metal keys attached on top, and the instrument is sometimes mounted on a calabash/ wooden resonator. The metal keys are plucked using the thumbs or a combination of thumbs and fingers. The Mbira/Sansi produces a fluid percussive sound considered to be mystic, tranquil and enchanting.

An important feature of the music is its cyclical nature, where each new repetition of a theme varies slightly from the last and incorporates numerous interwoven melodies. The instrument can be played on its own or with multiple instruments in a group. Traditionally, transmission has occurred through apprenticeship within the family circle. However, today transmission also takes place through formal coaching, Mbira/Sansi making and playing is taught in some schools. The songs contain important messages, and are also used to communicate information about events that happened in the past.

Mbira/Sansi © Andrea Aigner/stock.adobe.com*

MALAWI, MOZAMBIQUE AND ZAMBIA

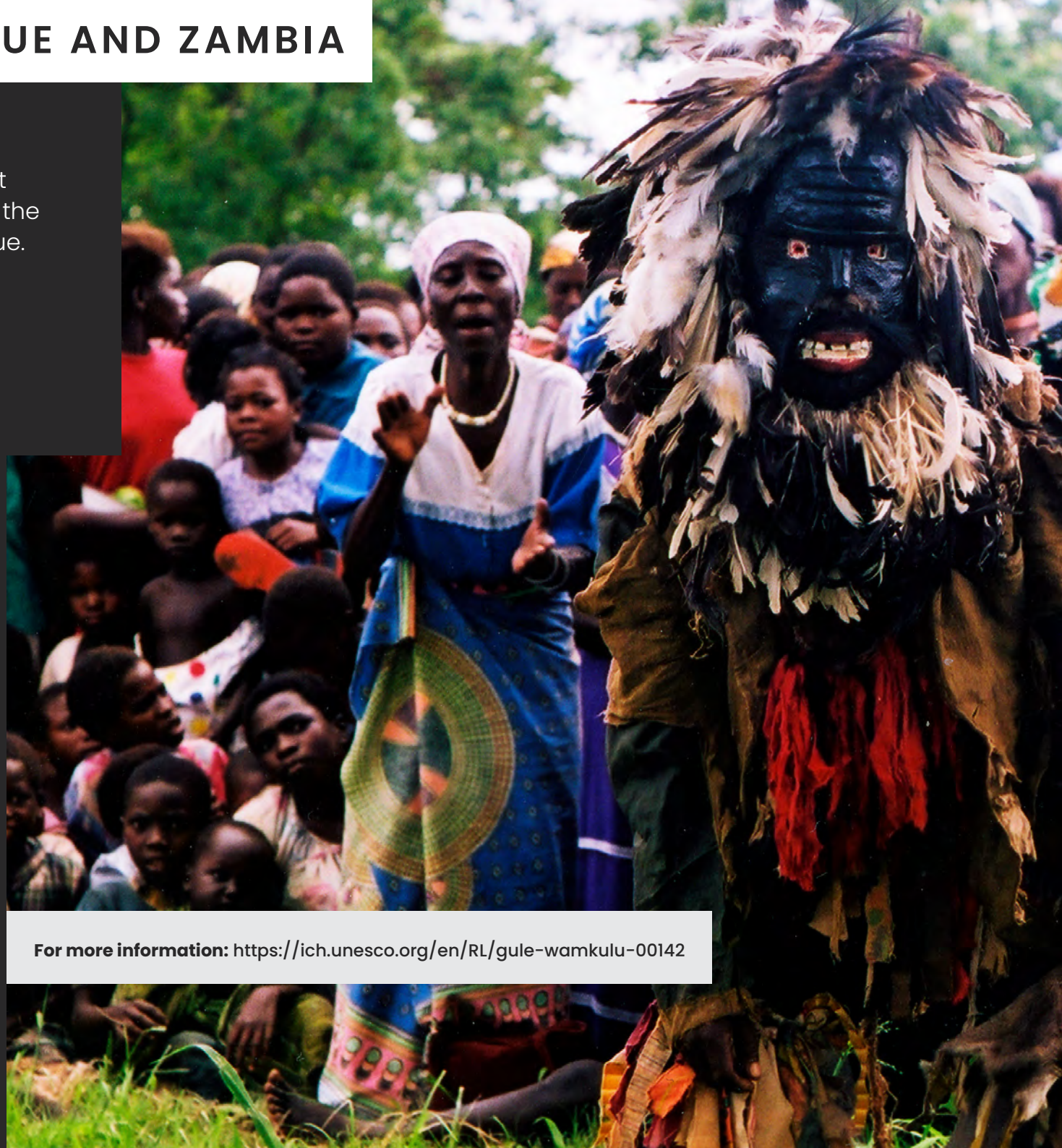
Gule Wamkulu was originally a secret cult involving a ritual dance practiced among the Chewa in Malawi, Zambia and Mozambique.

#VisitMalawi

#VisitMozambique

#VisitZambia

Inscribed on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2008 (originally proclaimed in 2005)



For more information: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/gule-wamkulu-00142>



GULE WAMKULU

Gule Wamkulu was performed by members of the Nyau brotherhood, a secret society of initiated men. Within the Chewa's traditional matrilineal society, where married men played a rather marginal role, the Nyau offered a means to establish a counterweight and solidarity among men of various villages.

Nyau members still are responsible for the initiation of young men into adulthood, and for the performance of the Gule Wamkulu at the end of the initiation procedure, celebrating the young men's integration into adult society.

Gule Wamkulu is performed in the season following the July harvest, but it can also be seen at weddings, funerals, and the installation or the death of a chief.

Gule Wamkulu © Malawi National Commission for UNESCO/
Christopher Magomelo, 2005*

MALAWI

Mwinoghe Joyous Dance is an instrumental dance performed among three ethnic communities – Sukwa, Ndali and Bandyā – in the northern region of Malawi.

#VisitMalawi

Inscribed on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2018



For more information: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/mwinoghejoyous-dance-01293>



The word 'Mwinoghe' literally means 'Let us enjoy ourselves.'

MWINOGHE JOYOUS DANCE

Mwinoghe, joyous dance, Malawi © Lovemore Mazibuko/Museums of Malawi, 2013*

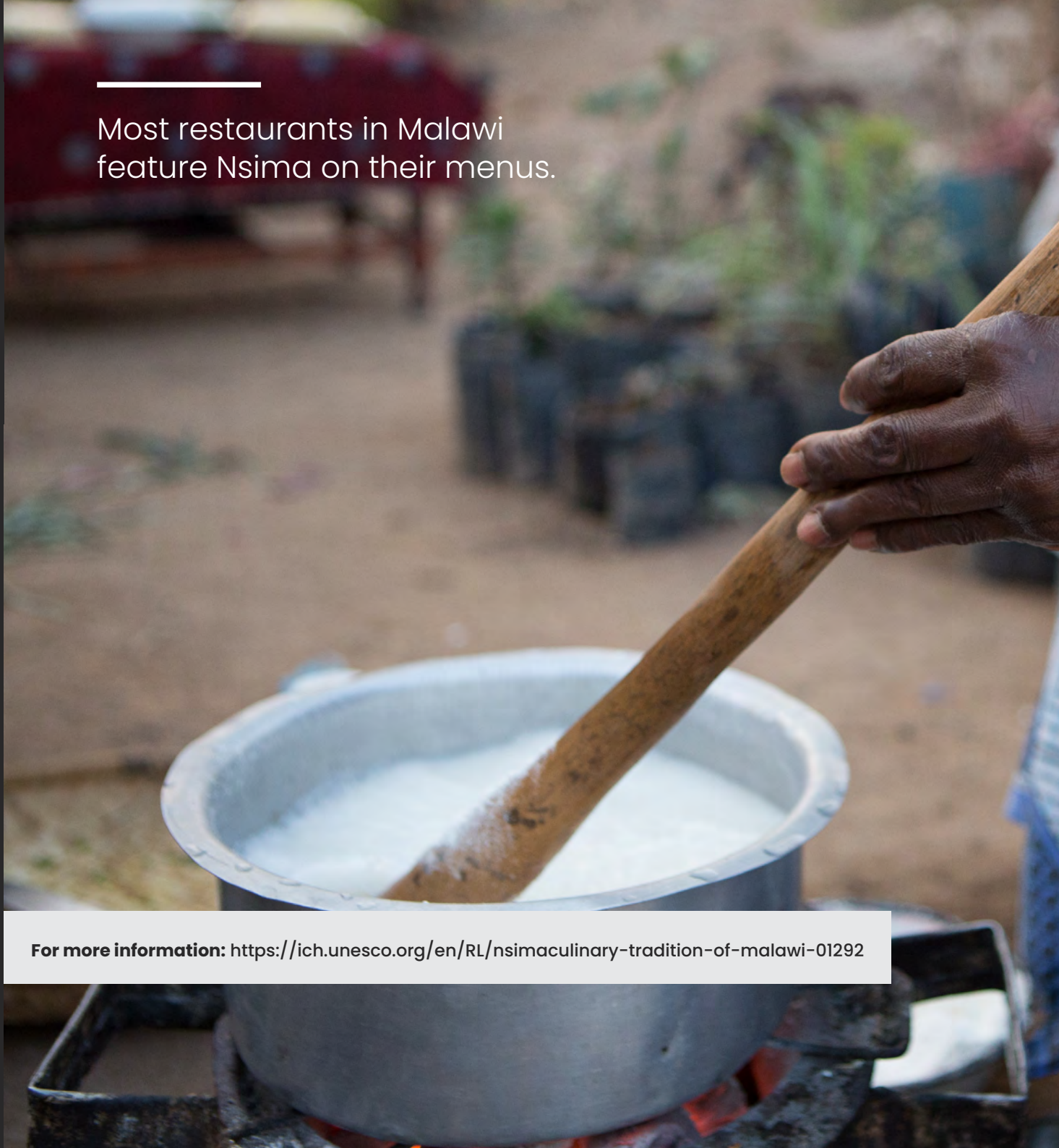
In the Chisukwa dialect, the word 'Mwinoghe' literally means 'Let us enjoy ourselves': the dance is therefore performed to express joy and happiness. Derived from a ceremonial dance of the neighbouring Karonga district, called Indingala, Mwinoghe is a relatively recent dance. Dancers line up in two rows, with men on one side and women on the other, and perform twisting body and elaborate foot movements. There is no singing; the only sound comes from the three drums, the whistle, and the group leader's commands.

MALAWI

Nsima is a compound name for the culinary and dietary tradition of Malawians.

#VisitMalawi

Inscribed on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2017



Most restaurants in Malawi feature Nsima on their menus.

For more information: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/nsimaculinary-tradition-of-malawi-01292>

A close-up photograph of a person's hands and arms as they pound maize in a mortar. The person is wearing a vibrant blue and white patterned dress. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people and greenery. The text 'NSIMA CULINARY TRADITION OF MALAWI' is overlaid in large white letters on a dark grey rectangular background.

NSIMA CULINARY TRADITION OF MALAWI

Preparing Nsima, Malawi © Avanel/stock.adobe.com*

Nsima, culinary tradition of Malawi is a compound name for the culinary and dietary tradition of Malawians as well as the name of a single component of this tradition, a form of thick porridge prepared with maize flour. Nsima is prepared through an elaborate process requiring specific knowledge, from pounding the maize into flour to selecting the accompanying food and then preparing and serving it. Certain customs are followed during mealtimes, for example to regulate gluttony and promote cleanliness and cohesion.

MALAWI

Tchopa sacrificial dance is a performing art practised among Lhomwe communities in southern Malawi.

#VisitMalawi

Inscribed on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2014



Tchopa, Malawi © Comfort Mtotha/Museums of Malawi, 2011*



For more information: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/tchopasacrificial-dance-of-the-lhomwe-people-of-southern-malawi-00999>

Each village headman has a small group of Tchopa dancers.

TCHOPA SACRIFICIAL DANCE

OF THE LHOMWE PEOPLE OF SOUTHERN MALAWI

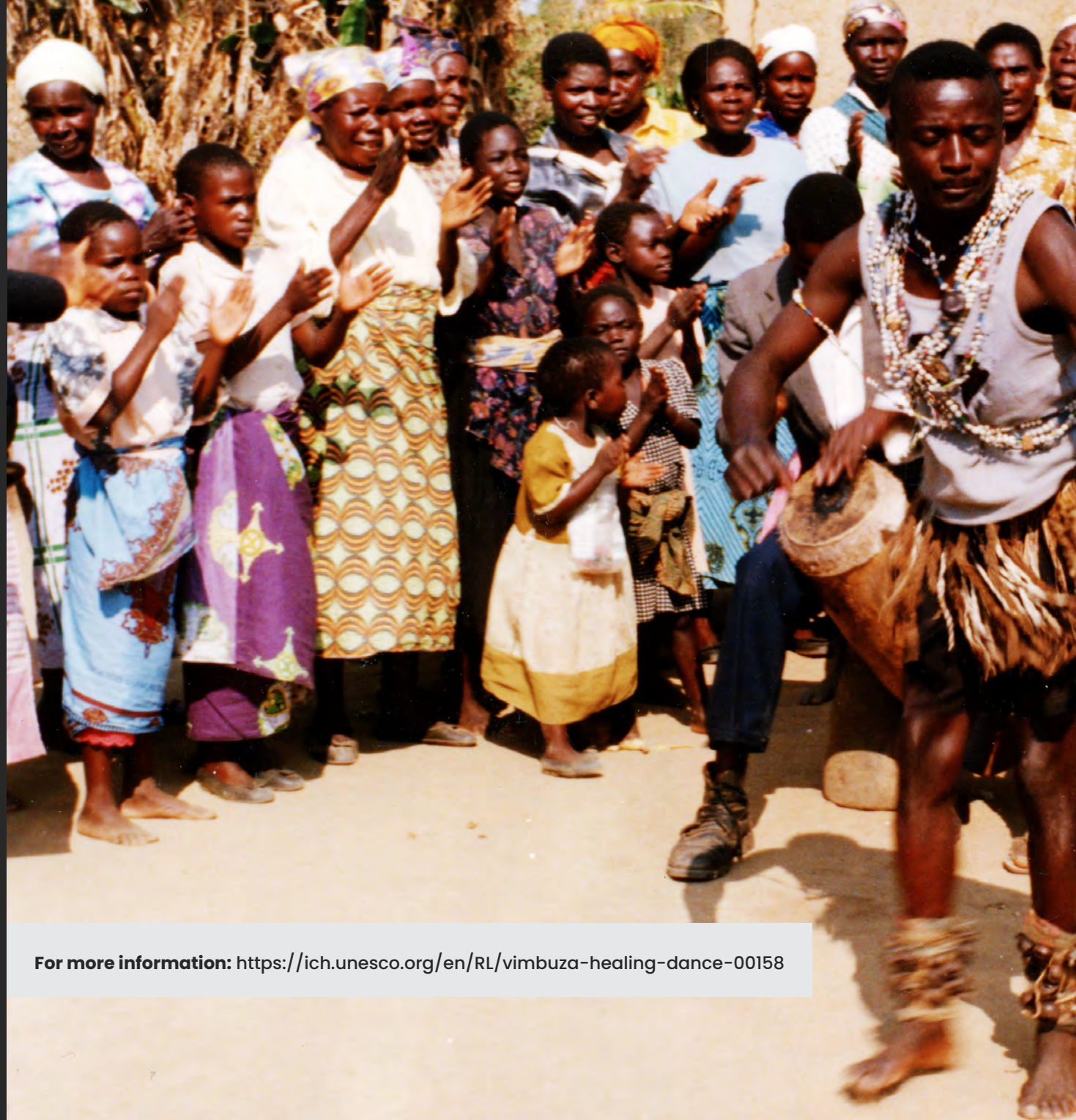
The dance is usually performed during celebrations after good harvests and successful hunting trips and during offerings to ancestral spirits after calamities such as droughts and outbreaks of disease. Tchopa entails knowledge of particular dancing skills and singing, and employs three different sizes of drums. Twenty to thirty dancers perform in a circle while criss crossing each other. Some dancers carry packs on their backs holding farming tools, animal skins, puppets, hunting gear and old kitchen utensils.

MALAWI

Vimbuza is a healing dance popular among the Tumbuka people living in northern Malawi.

#VisitMalawi

Inscribed on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2008 (originally proclaimed in 2005)



For more information: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/vimbuza-healing-dance-00158>



Vimbuza, Malawi © Malawi National Commission for UNESCO/
Christopher Magomelo, 2005*

VIMBUZA HEALING DANCE

It is an important manifestation of the ng'oma, a healing tradition found throughout Bantu-speaking Africa. Ng'oma, meaning "drums of affliction", carries considerable historical depth and, despite various attempts over the years to suppress it, remains a fundamental part of indigenous healthcare systems. Most patients are women who suffer from various forms of mental illness. They are treated for some weeks or months by renowned healers who run a temphiri, a village house where patients are accommodated.

By becoming possessed by Vimbuza spirits, people could express mental problems in a way that was accepted and understood by the surrounding society.

MAURITIUS

Located on the bay of Trou Fanfaron, in Port-Louis, the **Aapravasi Ghat** is the remains of an immigration depot, the site from where modern indentured labour diaspora emerged.

#VisitAapravasiGhat

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2006



For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1227>



Aapravasi Ghat is among the earliest explicit manifestations of what was to become a global economic system and one of the greatest migrations in history.

AAPRAVASI GHAT

The Aapravasi Ghat, stands as a major historic testimony of indenture, a system of bonded labour that was instituted following the abolition of slavery in the 19th century and is the sole surviving example of this unique modern diaspora.

Built in 1849, the Aapravasi Ghat received indentured labourers from India, East Africa, Madagascar, China and Southeast Asia that were to work on the island's sugar estates.

Between 1834 and 1920, almost half a million indentured labourers arrived from India at the Aapravasi Ghat to work in the sugar plantations of Mauritius, sometimes transferred to Reunion Island, Australia, Southern and Eastern Africa or the Caribbean. The buildings of the Aapravasi Ghat are among the earliest manifestations of what was to become one of the greatest migrations in history and it remains associated with the memories of indentured labourers and their descendants.

Aapravasi Ghat, Mauritius © Barbara Blanchard*

MAURITIUS

Southwest of Mauritius lies **Le Morne Cultural Landscape**, a rugged mountain that juts into the Indian Ocean.

#VisitLeMorne

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2008



This site once gave refuge to the 18th and early 19th century runaway marooned slaves.

For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1259>



LE MORNE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

Le Morne Cultural Landscape is a testimony to maroonage or slavery resistance, as it sheltered escaped slaves. Protected by the mountain's isolated, wooded and almost inaccessible cliffs, the escaped slaves formed small settlements in the caves and on the summit of Le Morne mountain.

The oral traditions associated with the maroons have made Le Morne a symbol of the marooned slaves fighting for their freedom, as well as illustrating their suffering and sacrifice, all of which have relevance to the slaves' countries of origin in the African mainland, Madagascar, India, and Southeast Asia.

Mauritius, an important stopover in the eastern slave trade, came to be known as the "Maroon Republic" because of the large number of escaped slaves who lived on Le Morne Mountain.

Le Morne, Mauritius © Sapsiwai/stock.adobe.com*

MAURITIUS

Geet-Gawai is a pre-wedding ceremony that combines rituals, prayer, songs, music and dance.

#VisitMauritius

Inscribed on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2016



For more information: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/bhojpuri-folk-songs-in-mauritius-geet-gawai-01178>



The practice also provides participants with a sense of pride and contributes to greater social cohesion, and breaking class and caste barriers.

BHOJPURI FOLK SONGS IN MAURITIUS, GEET-GAWAI

Geet-Gawai is performed mainly by Bhojpuri speaking communities in Mauritius who have Indian descent. The traditional practice takes place at the home of the bride or groom and involves female family members and neighbours. It begins with five married women sorting items (turmeric, rice, grass and money) in a piece of cloth while other participants sing songs that honour Hindu gods and goddesses. After the site has been sanctified, the mother of the bride or groom and a drummer honour musical instruments to be played during the ceremony, such as the dholak (a two-headed drum). Uplifting songs are then performed and everyone joins in and dances.

Geet-Gawai, Mauritius © Nipon Medhi/National Heritage Fund, Mauritius, 2015*

MAURITIUS

Traditional Mauritian Sega is a vibrant performing art, emblematic of the Creole community and performed at informal private family events or in public spaces.

#VisitMauritius

Inscribed on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2014



For more information: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/traditional-mauritian-sega-01003>

The practice also provides participants with a sense of pride and contributes to greater social cohesion, and breaking class and caste barriers.

TRADITIONAL MAURITIAN SEGA

Songs sung in a minor key gradually increase in tempo, as dancers move their hips and hands to a percussive beat, using short steps to manoeuvre around each other in a variety of different formations. Each soloist improvises lyrics in the Creole language, sometimes blended with other languages, while a frame drum, box rattle and triangle keep time and produce the rhythmic beat. Sega songs can talk of love or address everyday challenges and concerns, with the meaning often enacted through the choreography.

Traditional Mauritian Sega, Mauritius © 2014, National Heritage Fund/Nipon Medhi

MAURITIUS

Sega tambour of Rodrigues Island

is a vibrant rhythmic performance of music, song and dance with its origins in slave communities.

#VisitMauritius

Inscribed on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2017



Recognized as a symbol of the history of the Rodriguan community.

For more information: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/USL/sega-tambour-of-rodrigues-island-01257>





SEGA TAMBOUR OF RODRIGUES ISLAND

Segga tambour of Rodrigues Island, Mauritius © James Castel, 2015*

The leading percussion, the tambour, is banged energetically, while a triyang is hit from the side and the bwat and mayos are clapped. Segga Tambour is performed all over Rodrigues Island in the home and on the streets, at formal and informal functions. The primary bearers are the Rodrigues community, as well as the diaspora on the island of Mauritius and elsewhere, and the art is open to everyone irrespective of age, gender or status. With its origins in defiance and resilience, Segga Tambour facilitates conflict resolution, fosters socialization and consolidates bonds.

MAURITIUS

Sega tambour Chagos is one of the types of Sega music of Mauritius, with origins in the Chagos Archipelago.

#VisitMauritius

Inscribed on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding in 2019



For more information: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/USL/sega-tambour-chagos-01490>



Despite efforts to safeguard the element, there are numerous threats to its viability.

SEGA TAMBOUR CHAGOS

Like other Segga music, it is born from slavery and sung in Chagossian Creole particular to the islands. Segga tambour Chagos is a gentle, vibrant and rhythmic performance of music, song and dance based on the 'tambour' - a large, circular instrument that is heated and then played to produce throbbing beats - which provides the basic rhythm. The lyrics consist of everyday experiences, often composed spontaneously, including narrations of sadness, happiness and rebellion. Segga tambour Chagos is also accompanied by traditional food and drink.

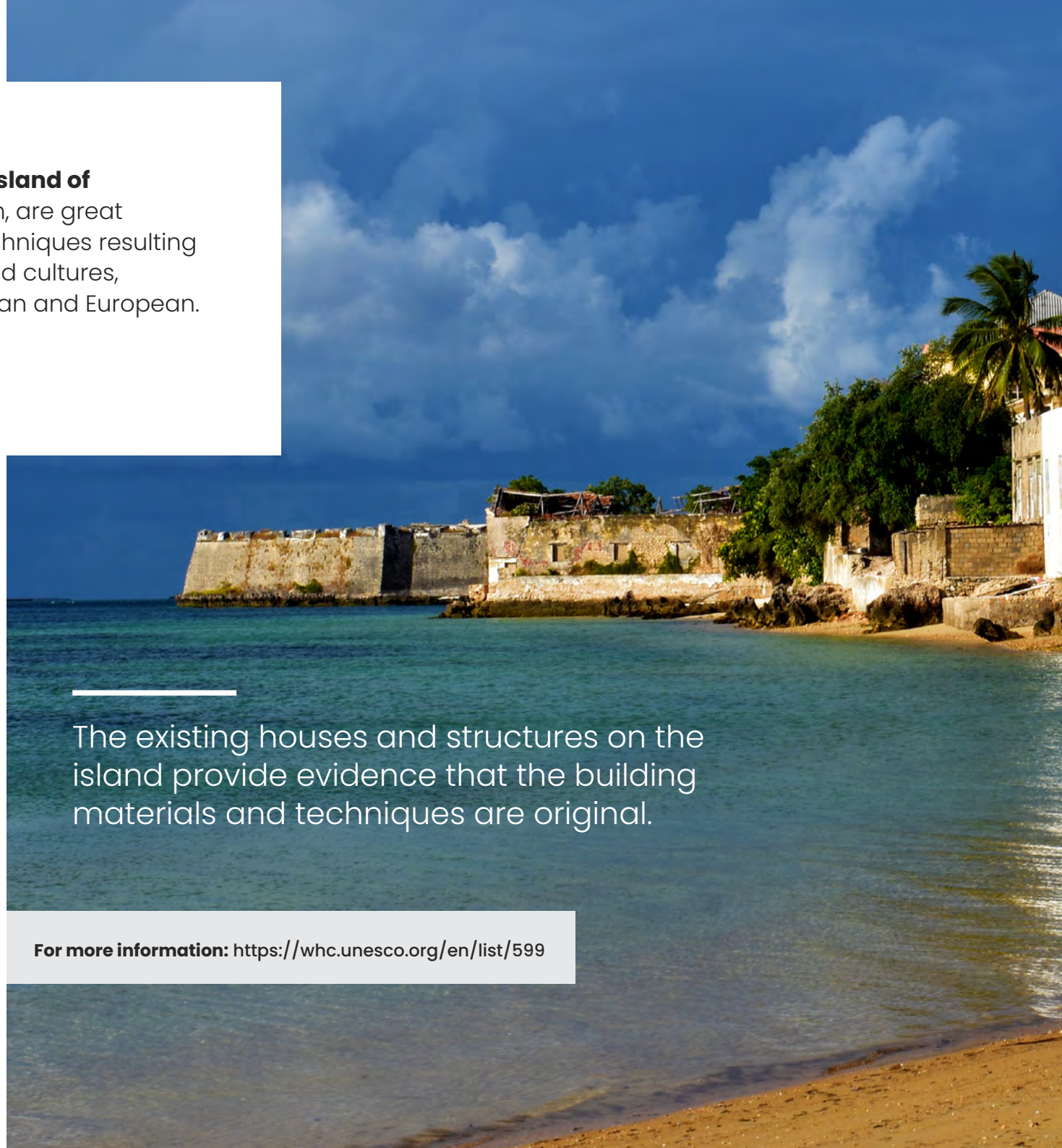
Segga tambour Chagos, Mauritius © National Heritage Fund, Mauritius, 2017*

MOZAMBIQUE

The urban fabric and fortifications of the **Island of Mozambique**, located in the Indian Ocean, are great examples of architecture and building techniques resulting from the interaction of diverse peoples and cultures, including Bantu, Swahili, Arab, Persian, Indian and European.

#VisitIslandOfMozambique

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1991



The existing houses and structures on the island provide evidence that the building materials and techniques are original.

For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/599>



ISLAND OF MOZAMBIQUE

The remarkable architectural unity of the island derives from the consistent and uninterrupted use of the same building techniques, building materials and decorative principles.

The island communities are intimately associated with the history of navigation in the Indian Ocean as the island played a unique role in intercontinental trading links from the 10th century. Its international historic importance relates to the development and establishment of Portuguese maritime routes between Western Europe and the Indian subcontinent.

The island has two different types of dwellings and urban systems: the stone and lime town of Swahili, Arab and European influences in the north half, and the palm leaf roof Macuti town of traditional African architecture in the south. These buildings reflect urban development within a cultural continuum where local and external architectural designs and building techniques were adapted to fit the local social and environmental context.

Up until today, the intangible attributes of the island of Mozambique are embodied in the community's gastronomy, fishing practices and boat construction techniques, intertwining the tangible heritage of the site with the social fabric of the island.

Island of Mozambique © Shukri/stock.adobe.com*

MOZAMBIQUE

The **Chopi** communities live mainly in the southern part of Inhambane province in southern Mozambique and are famous for their orchestra music.

#VisitMozambique

Inscribed on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2008 (originally proclaimed in 2005)



For more information: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/chopi-timbila-00133>



Deforestation has led to the scarcity of the wood needed to produce the particular sonority of the timbila instruments.

CHOPI TIMBILA

Their orchestras consist of five to thirty wooden xylophones, called timbila, of varying sizes and ranges of pitch. The timbila are finely manufactured and tuned wooden instruments made from the highly resonant wood of the slow-growing mwenje (sneezewort) tree.

Under each wooden slat, a resonator made out of calabashes is fastened, tightly sealed with beeswax, and tempered with the oil of the nkuso fruit, giving the timbila their rich nasal sound and characteristic vibrations. The orchestras are composed of timbila masters and apprentices of all age groups, with children playing next to their grandfathers.

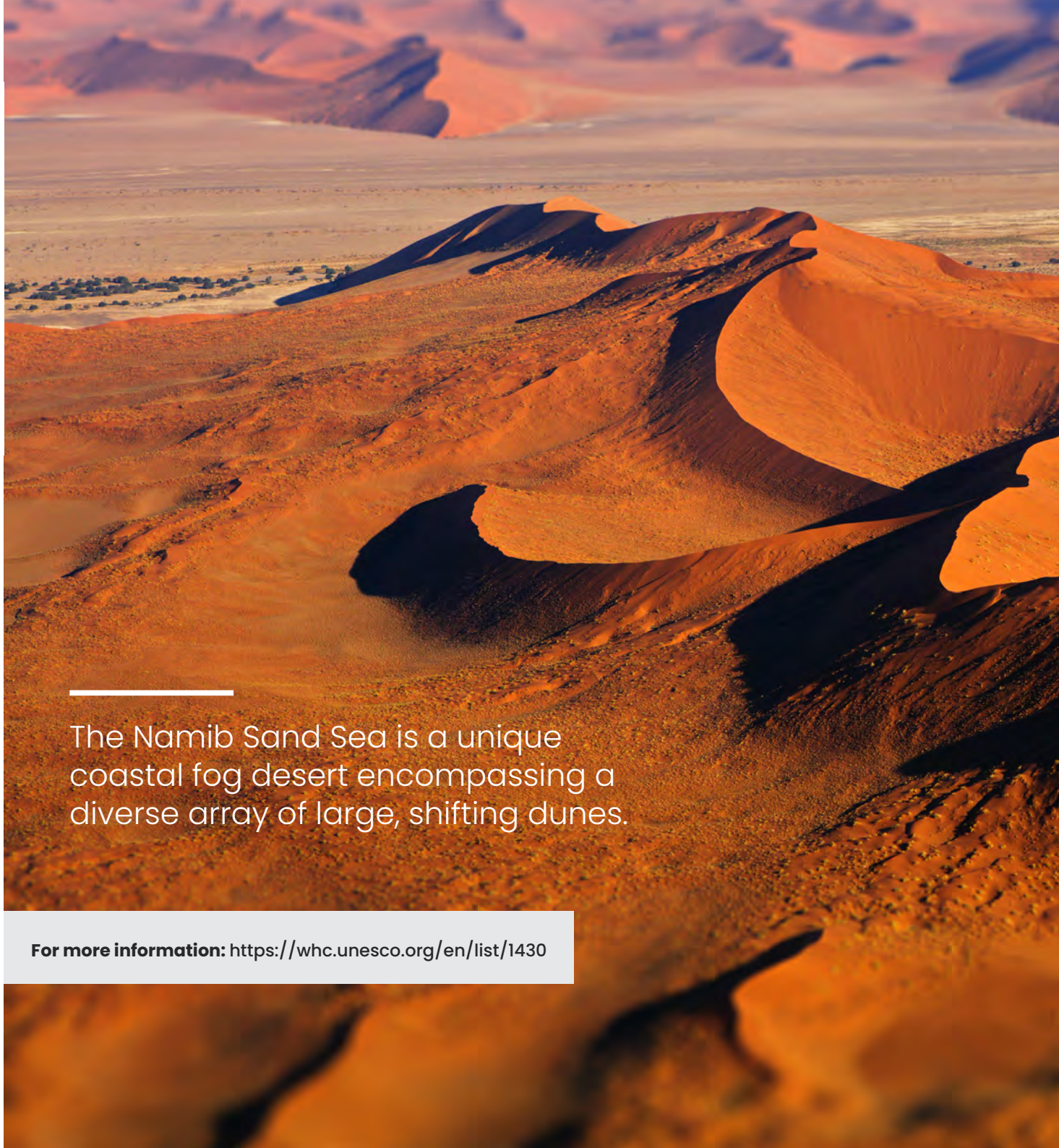
Chopi Timbila, Mozambique © UNESCO/Pereira Cristiana

NAMIBIA

The **Namib Sand Sea** lies along the arid African coast of the South Atlantic and covers an area of over 3 million hectares.

#VisitNamibSandSea

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2013



The Namib Sand Sea is a unique coastal fog desert encompassing a diverse array of large, shifting dunes.

For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1430>



NAMIB SAND SEA

It is the only coastal desert in the world that includes extensive dune fields influenced by fog. An outstanding example of the scenic, geomorphological, ecological and evolutionary consequences of wind-driven processes interacting with geology and biology.

84 per cent of the site is covered by dunes formed by sand transported from more than 1,000 km. It features gravel plains, coastal flats, rocky hills, inselbergs within the sand sea, a coastal lagoon and ephemeral rivers, resulting in a landscape of exceptional beauty.

Fog, being the primary source of water in the site, accounts for a unique environment in which endemic invertebrates, reptiles and mammals adapt to an ever-changing variety of microhabitats and ecological niches. Life in the fog-bathed coastal dunes of the Namib Sand Sea is an example of evolution and the resilience of life in extreme environments.

Namib Sand Sea, Namibia © Wirestock Creators/stock.adobe.com*

NAMIBIA

Located in the Kunene Region of Namibia, **Twyfelfontein** or **/Ui-//aes** has one of the largest concentrations of rock engravings representing hunting scenes, rhinoceros, antelopes, zebras, elephants, ostriches and giraffes, as well as human and animal footprints, in Africa.

#VisitTwyfelfontein

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2007



For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1255>

The setting of the Twyfelfontein rock art is authentic, no panels have been moved or re-arranged.

TWYFELFONTEIN OR /UI-//AES

The site illustrates a coherent, extensive and high quality record of ritual practices relating to hunter gatherer communities in this part of Southern Africa over at least two millennia. Twyfelfontein or /Ui-//aes eloquently reflects the link between ritual and economic practices related to the value of reliable water sources, crucial in nurturing hunter-gatherer communities for centuries.

Twyfelfontein, Namibia © Cezary Wojtkowski/stock.adobe.com*

NAMIBIA

The **Oshituthi shomagongo, marula fruit festival** is a celebration that lasts two to three days between March and April, uniting the eight Aawambo communities of northern Namibia through the consumption of omagongo, a beverage made from marula fruit.

#VisitNamibia

Inscribed on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2015



For more information: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/oshituthi-shomagongo-marula-fruit-festival-01089>



The festival is a relaxed social gathering during which communities and guests socialize, sing and dance, and men recite histories.

OSHITUTHI SHOMAGONGO,

MARULA FRUIT FESTIVAL

In preparation for the festival, men carve wooden goblets and small serving gourds, and tools from cattle horns to pierce the fruit. Meanwhile, women make the baskets and clay pots used for processing omagongo, gather the ripened fruit with the help of young people, and extract and ferment the juice in clay pots for two to seven days.

During the process, they discuss issues that affect them, such as family problems, sing traditional songs, recite poems and share knowledge about basketry and pottery-making. Processing the marula fruits brings old and young people together to share knowledge and skills, which are transmitted informally through observation, active participation and emulation.

Oshituthi shomagongo, marula fruit festival, Namibia © S. Katangolo/ Ministry of Youth, National Service, Sport and Culture, 2012*

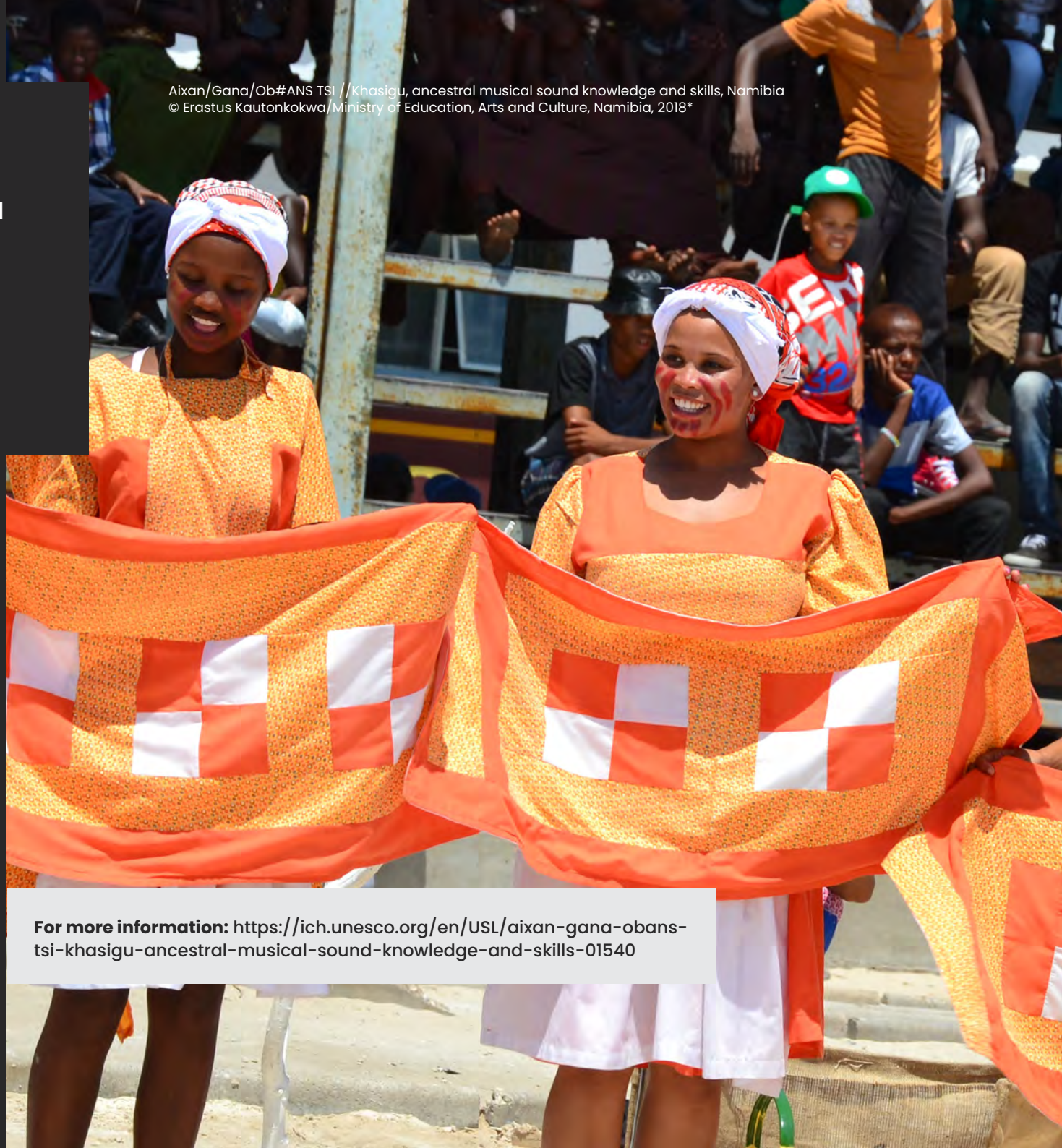
NAMIBIA

Aixan/Gana/Ob#ANS TSI //Khasigu, ancestral musical sound knowledge and skills, Namibia
© Erastus Kautonkokwa/Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, Namibia, 2018*

Aixan/Gana/Ob#ANS TSI //Khasigu, ancestral musical sound knowledge and skills relates to the specific traditional music of the Nama people, one of Namibia's tribal minority groups.

#VisitNamibia

Inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2020



For more information: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/USL/aixan-gana-obans-tsi-khasigu-ancestral-musical-sound-knowledge-and-skills-01540>

AIXAN/GANA/OB#ANS TSI // KHASIGU,

ANCESTRAL MUSICAL SOUND KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

It involves the use of traditional musical instruments: the khab (musical bow) and !guitsib (traditional guitar), usually played by men or women, and the vlies (harmonica), usually played by women, accompanied by singing, humming and ululating. Nama ancestral music has a specific sound, texture and rhythm, consisting of a leading melody and rhythm by either a musical bow, accordion or guitar, accompanied by a systematic harmony produced by other instruments. As well as the skill of playing the instruments, the musicians also require the knowledge to tune, maintain and fix the instruments.

The music is also complemented by dances commonly referred to as 'Nama-stap', meaning the dancing steps of the Nama people. The music provides entertainment during key social occasions but, more importantly, it is also used to educate and instruct members of the community, for instance concerning environmental awareness. In the past, the music connected whole communities and villages, but the art currently faces many threats and in recent years only a few elders have practised the tradition and possessed the related knowledge and skills. As a result, UNESCO has listed this element on the "Urgent Safeguarding List".

The music provides entertainment during key social occasions but, more importantly, it is also used to educate and instruct members of the community."



SEYCHELLES

Located in the Indian Ocean, the **Aldabra Atoll** is an outstanding example of a raised coral atoll illustrating an oceanic island ecosystem in which evolutionary processes are active within a rich flora and fauna.

#VisitAldabraAtoll

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1982



Most of the land surface comprises ancient coral reefs of around 125,000 years old, still raised above sea level.



For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/185>

ALDABRA ATOLL

Aldabra Atoll consists of four main islands of coral limestone separated by narrow passes and enclosing a large shallow lagoon, providing a superlative spectacle of natural phenomena. Marine habitats of this site range from coral reefs to seagrass beds and mangrove mudflats with minimal human impact.

The isolation of Aldabra Atoll has allowed the evolution of over 400 endemic flora and fauna, including a population of over 100,000 Aldabra giant tortoise, which are the last survivors of a life form once found on other Indian Ocean islands, endangered green turtles, and critically endangered Hawksbill turtles. The site is a significant natural habitat for birds, including for the endemic species Aldabra brush warbler and Aldabra drago, the white-throated rail -the last remaining flightless bird of the Western Indian Ocean-, the second largest frigate bird colonies in the world and one of the world's only two oceanic flamingo populations.

Aldabra Atoll, Seychelles © Janos/stock.adobe.com*

The **Vallée de Mai Nature Reserve**, located in the granitic island of Praslin, represents an outstanding example of biological evolution dominated by endemic, mature and scenic palm forest that has remained largely unchanged since prehistoric times.

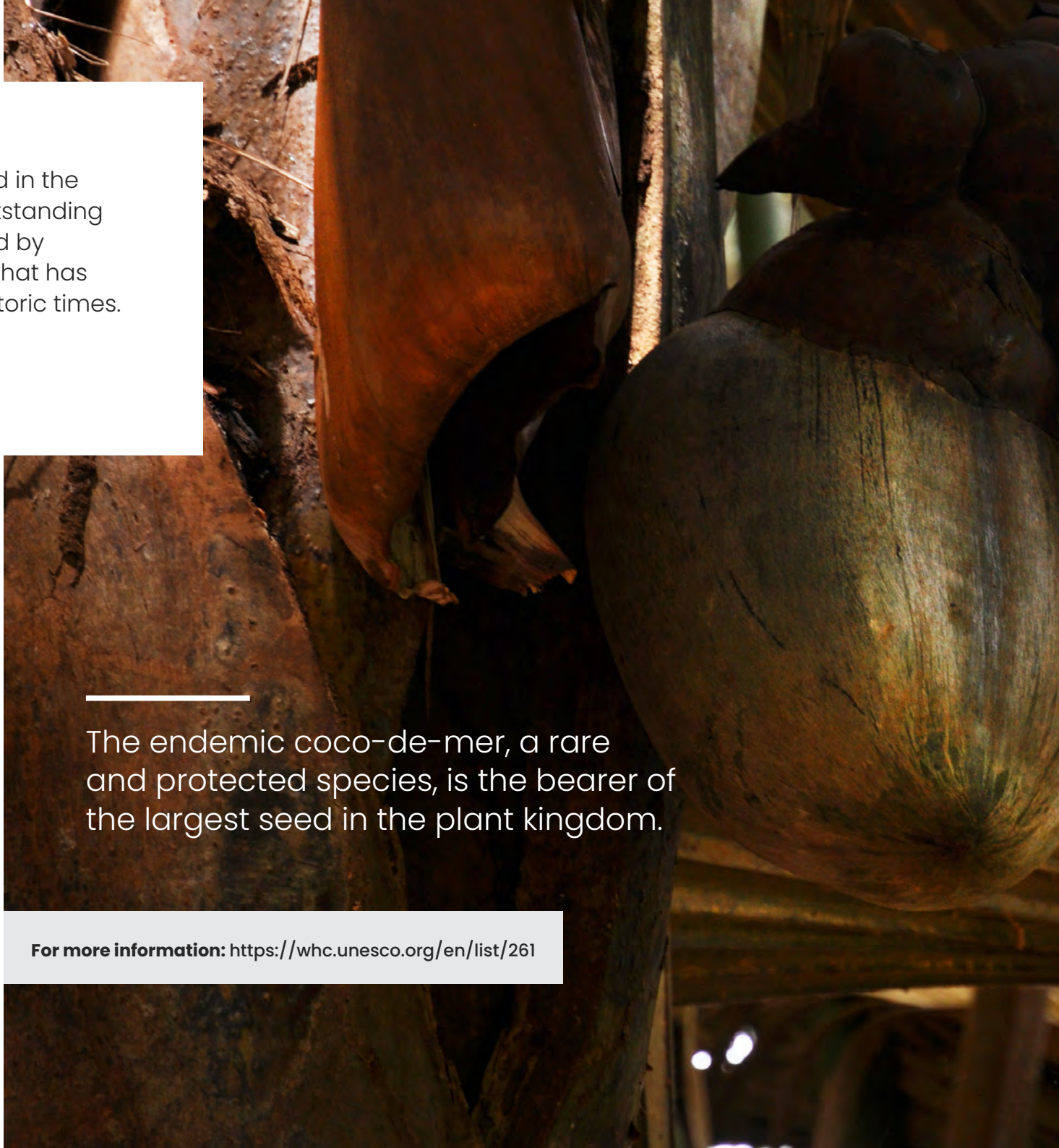
#VisitValleeDeMai

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1983



The endemic coco-de-mer, a rare and protected species, is the bearer of the largest seed in the plant kingdom.

For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/261>





VALLÉE DE MAI NATURE RESERVE

The Reserve hosts six species of the endemic coco-de-mer, the endemic millionaire's salad, the thief palm, the Seychelles stilt palm, the latanier mille pattes and the latanier palm. This unique habitat is home to an impressive fauna, including three endemic species of bronze gecko, endemic blue pigeons, bulbul, sunbirds, swiftlets, Seychelles skinks, burrowing skinks, tiger chameleons, day geckos, caecilians, tree frogs, freshwater fish and many invertebrates.

Vallée de Mai Nature Reserve, Seychelles © MassimilianoF/stock.adobe.com*

SEYCHELLES

Moutya was brought to Seychelles by the enslaved Africans who arrived with the French settlers in the early eighteenth century. They used to practise this dance at night in the forest, at a distance from the plantation house where their masters lived.

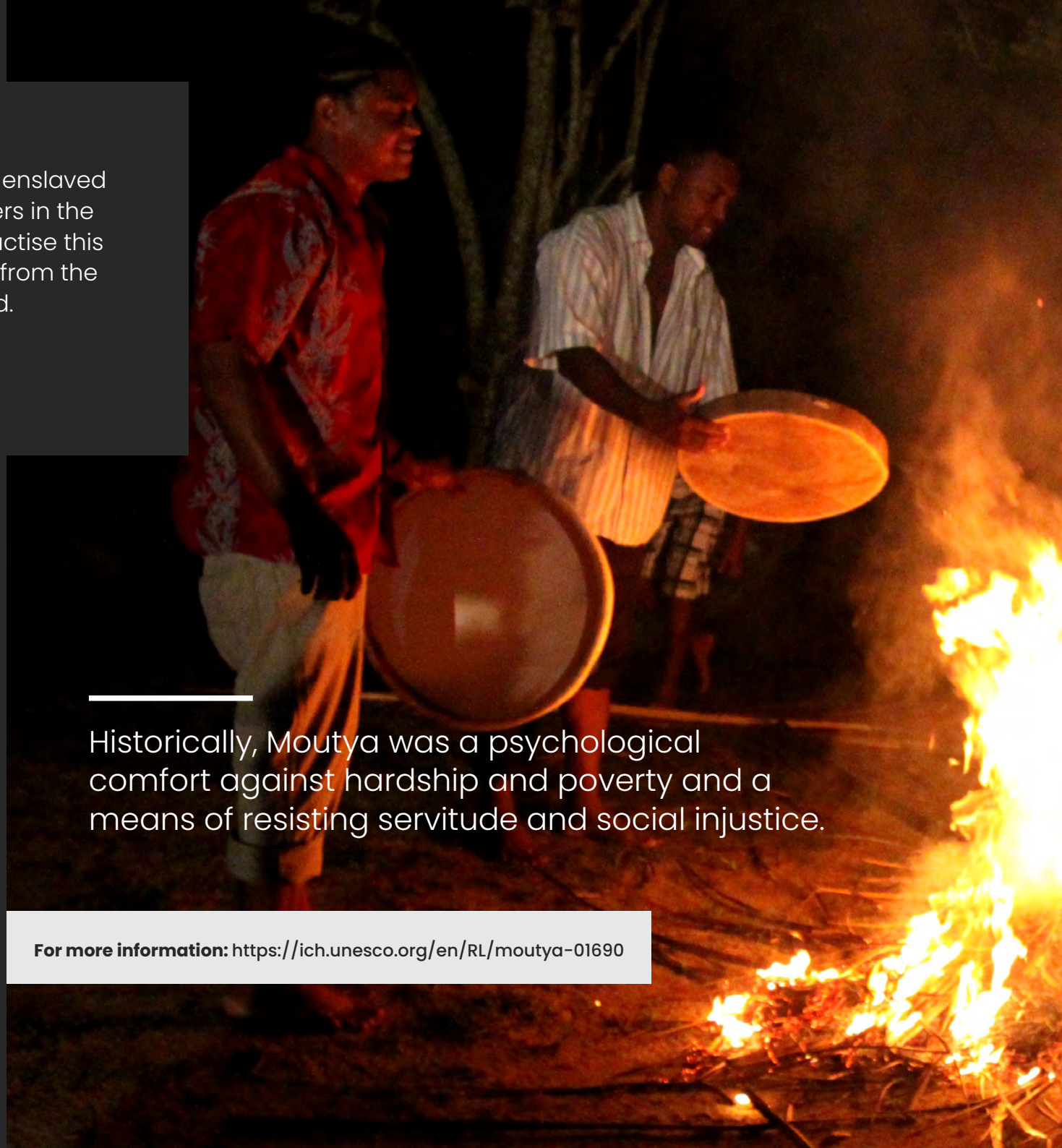
#VisitSeychelles

Inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2021



Historically, Moutya was a psychological comfort against hardship and poverty and a means of resisting servitude and social injustice.

For more information: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/moutya-01690>





MOUTYA

A sensual dance with simple choreography, it is traditionally performed around a bonfire. The musical instrument used is a large drum with a narrow rim made of goat hide which is played mostly by men. The dance begins with the heating of the drums over a bonfire. Once the drums have been warmed, the drummers set the beat and men in the crowd call out various themes, usually social commentaries, to which the female dancers respond in high-pitched tones. The men and women begin to dance to a moderate tempo involving hip-swaying and feet-shuffling.

The dancers come close, but do not physically touch. Moutya continues to be a form of expression of cultural identity to this day, retaining its traditional dance form. It is usually performed spontaneously within the community, as well as at social gatherings and cultural events. Moutya is transmitted informally through performance, observation and imitation and formally through research, documentation and dissemination.

Moutya, Seychelles © Mr Johnny Volcere/Seychelles, 2013*

SOUTH AFRICA

Robben Island, with an approximate area of 13 km² and located 10 km north of Cape Town, has a rich multilayered history, shaped by its many different occupants and uses, dating back hundreds of years.

#VisitRobbenIsland

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1999



For the past 500 years, Robben Island has been used as a prison, a medical institution and a military base. It now houses a museum.

For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/916>



ROBBEN ISLAND

Its buildings, in particular those of the late 20th century maximum security prison for political prisoners, testify to the way in which the fight for rights and freedom triumphed over oppression and racism. During its maximum-security prison era, the island housed over 3,500 political prisoners, including Nelson Mandela, who spent more than 20 years of his incarceration at Robben Island.

Prior to becoming a maximum security prison, Robben Island was also used as a place of banishment and imprisonment for Khoi Khoi people resisting colonization and again as a general infirmary. The island is also remembered as a place where lepers were isolated. In 1997, it was converted into a museum to showcase the site's diverse history.

The island is home to a rich biodiversity and marine resources. This resulted in the waters around the island being declared a Marine Protected Area in 2018. The site is considered an important location for the conservation of nine species of seabirds, namely the African penguin, the bank cormorant, the crowned cormorant, the Cape cormorant, the Hartlaub's gull, the greyheaded gull, the Kelp gull, the swift tern and the Caspian tern.

Robben Island, South Africa © Richard/stock.adobe.com*

SOUTH AFRICA

Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape, located on the banks of the Limpopo River, is a remarkable testimony to the rise and decline of the largest kingdom in the Southern African region from the 10th until the 14th century.

#VisitMapungubwe

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2003



An open, expansive savannah landscape at the confluence of the Limpopo and Shashe rivers.



For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1099>



MAPUNGUBWE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE



Mapungubwe's position enabled it to control trade of precious commodities such as gold and ivory, Chinese porcelain and Persian glass beads, through the East African ports to India and China, and throughout Southern Africa. Mapungubwe's demise was brought about by climatic change: periods of warmer and wetter conditions suitable for agriculture in the Limpopo/ Shashe valley were interspersed with cooler and drier pulses.

With the decrease of rainfall, the land could no longer sustain a high population and inhabitants were obliged to disperse. Mapungubwe's position as a power base shifted north to Great Zimbabwe and, later, to Khami. The remains of this famous kingdom, when viewed against present-day fauna and flora and the geo-morphological formations of the Limpopo/ Shashe confluence, create an impressive cultural landscape of universal significance.

Mapungubwe National Park, South Africa © PACO COMO/stock.adobe.com

SOUTH AFRICA

Vredefort Dome, located 120 km southwest of Johannesburg, is the oldest, largest and most deeply eroded complex meteorite impact structure in the world, dating back 2,023 million years.

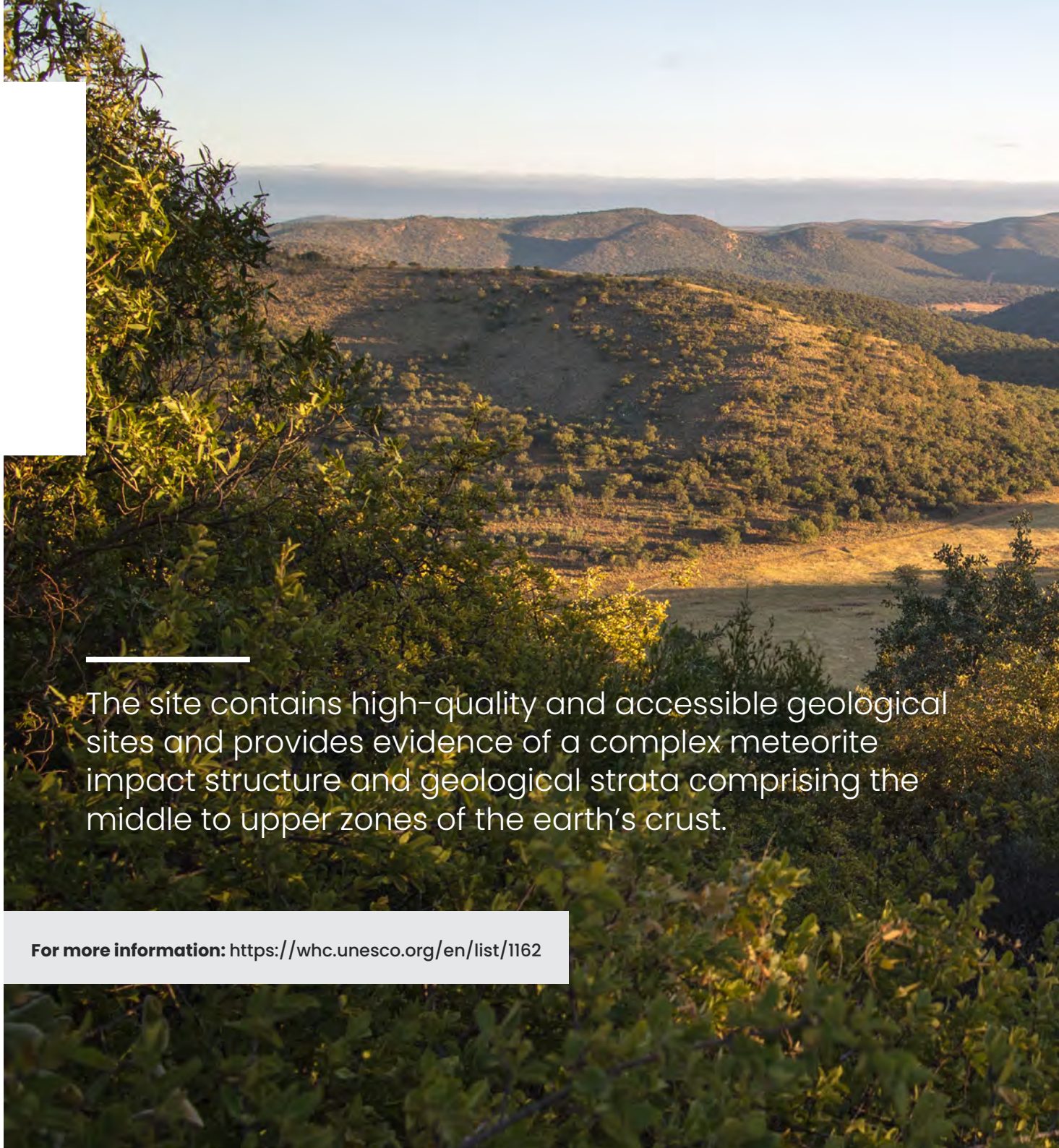
#VisitVredefortDome

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2005



The site contains high-quality and accessible geological sites and provides evidence of a complex meteorite impact structure and geological strata comprising the middle to upper zones of the earth's crust.

For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1162>





VREDEFORT DOME

A comprehensive comparative analysis with other complex meteorite impact structures demonstrated that Vredefort Dome is the only example on earth providing a full geological profile of an astrobleme –an eroded remnant of a large crater made by the impact of a meteorite or comet- below the crater floor, thereby enabling research into the genesis and development of an astrobleme immediately post-impact.

The site contains high-quality and accessible geological sites and provides evidence of a complex meteorite impact structure and geological strata comprising the middle to upper zones of the earth's crust. The Dome encompasses a finely balanced ecosystem consisting of grassland plains, bushveld, mountains and ravines containing an abundance of flora and fauna.

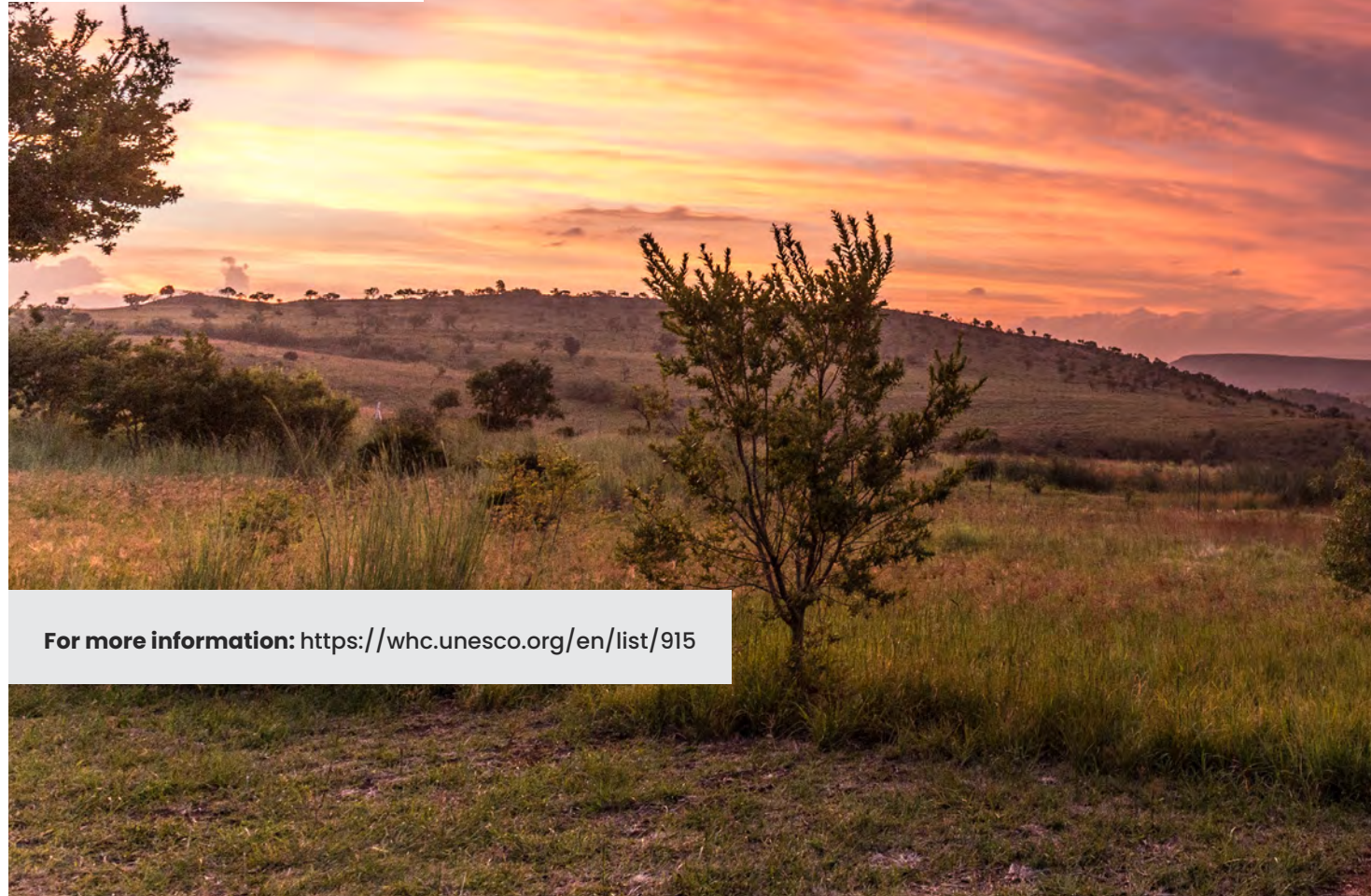
Vredefort Dome, South Africa © ankenevermann/stock.adobe.com*

SOUTH AFRICA


The **Fossil Hominid Sites of South Africa**, which is comprised by the Sterkfontein, Swartkrans, Kromdraai and Environs, and the Maka pan Valley and Taung Skull Fossil sites, collectively bear testimony to some of the most important Australopithecine specimens dating back more than 3.5 million years.

#VisitFossilHominidSites

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1999



For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/915>



These sites provide an understanding of the origins and the evolution of humankind, through the hominisation process.

FOSSIL HOMINID SITES

OF SOUTH AFRICA

The undulating landscape containing the fossil hominid sites of South Africa comprises dolomitic limestone ridges with rocky outcrops and valley grasslands, wooded along watercourses and in areas with natural springs.

Fossils found in the many archaeological and palaeontological sites have enabled the identification of several specimens of early hominids, more particularly of *Paranthropus*, dating back between 4.5 million and 2.5 million years, as well as evidence of the domestication of fire 1.8 million to 1 million years ago. Collectively these sites have produced abundant scientific information on the evolution of modern humans over at least the past 3.5 million years.

The fossil evidence contained within these sites proves conclusively that the African continent is the undisputed Cradle of Humankind.

Fossil Hominid Sites of South Africa © Benjamin [O°] Zweig/stock.adobe.com*

SOUTH AFRICA

The magnificent 239,566 hectare **iSimangaliso Wetland Park** is one of the most outstanding natural wetland and coastal sites in Africa.

#VisitiSimangaliso

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1999



The ongoing fluvial, marine and aeolian processes in the site have produced a variety of landforms, including coral reefs, long sandy beaches, coastal dunes, lake systems, swamps, and extensive reed and papyrus wetlands.

For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/914>



ISIMANGALISO WETLAND PARK

Out in coastal KwaZulu-Natal, the site has a wide range of pristine marine, coastal, wetland, estuarine and terrestrial environments. These provide critical habitats for a wide range of species from Africa's seas, wetlands and savannas. The interaction of these environments with major flood and coastal storms in the Park's transitional location has birthed a mirage of phenomenal biodiversity. iSimangaliso experiences three outstanding natural phenomena like the shifting salinity states within Lake St. Lucia, the congregation of large numbers of beach nesting turtles and dolphins and the off-shore migration of whales and an abundance of whale sharks. iSimangaliso has an ample number of waterfowl, large breeding colonies of pelicans, storks, herons and terns.

The five interlinked ecosystems found in iSimangaliso include a large number of threatened and endemic species: of the 6,500 plant and animal species recorded in the park, 11 are endemic to the park, while 108 are endemic to South Africa and 467 are listed as threatened in South Africa.

iSimangaliso Wetland Park, South Africa © bennymarty/stock.adobe.com*

SOUTH AFRICA

The **Cape Floral Region Protected Areas** is recognized as one of the six Floral Kingdoms of the world and as one of the world's 35 biodiversity hotspots for its diversity of endemic and threatened plants.

#VisitCapeFloralRegion

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2004



For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1007>



CAPE FLORAL REGION

Recognized as one of the most special floral places in the world in terms of diversity, density and number of endemic species.

Cape floral region, South Africa © Dewald/stock.adobe.com*

PROTECTED AREAS

Comprising 13 biodiversity hotspots in the Western and Eastern Cape provinces of South Africa, the Cape Floral Region Protected Areas represent ongoing ecological and biological processes associated with the evolution of the unique Fynbos biome. Collectively, hotspots have been recognized as one of the most special floral places in the world in terms of diversity, density and number of endemic species.

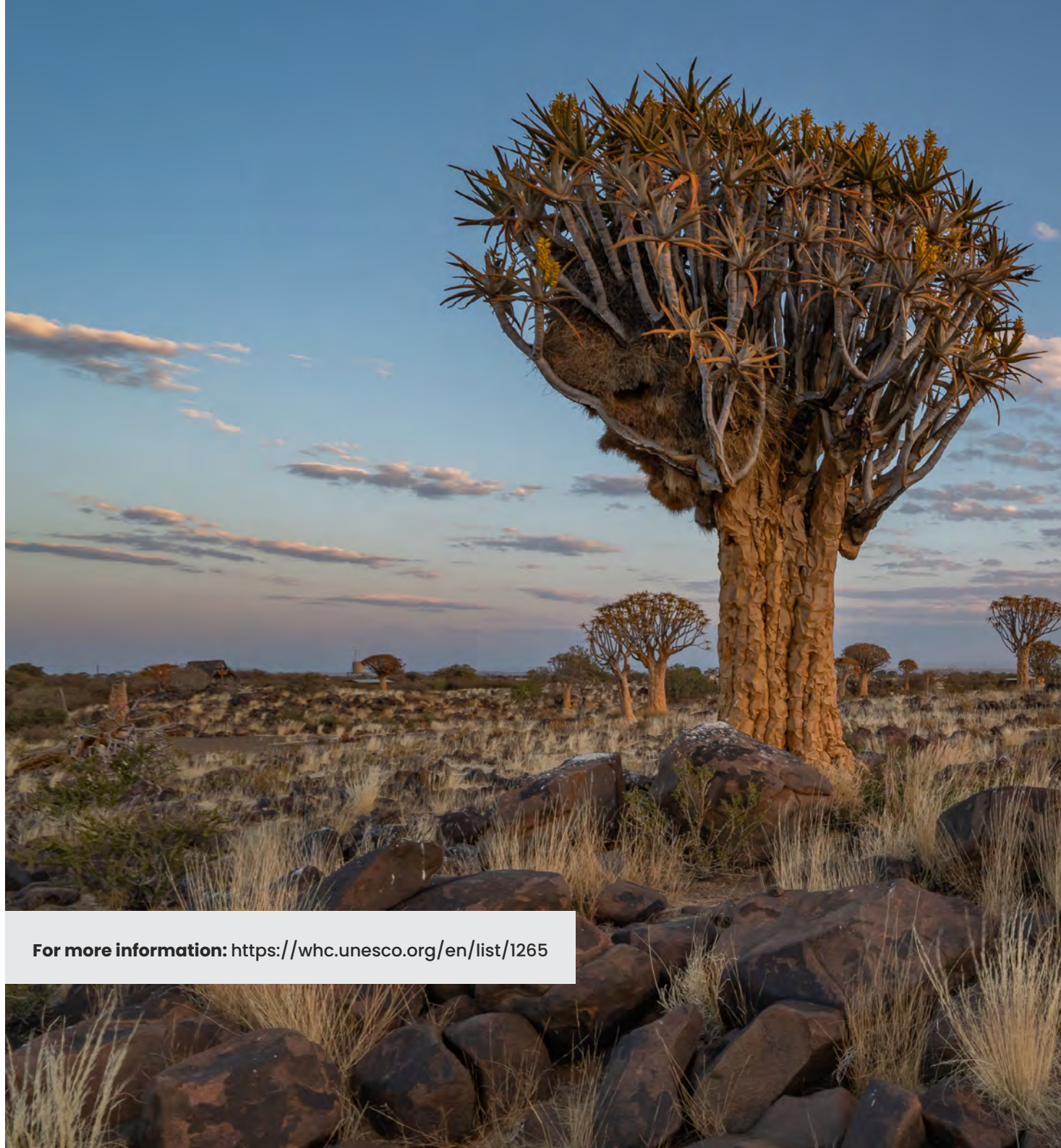
The site is recognized as one of the six Floral Kingdoms of the world and as one of the world's 35 biodiversity hotspots for its diversity of endemic and threatened plants. This extraordinary assemblage of flora and its associated fauna covers an area of more than 1 million hectares and is home to nearly 20 per cent of the continent's flora. Some 69 per cent of the estimated 9,000 plant species in the region are endemic, with 1,736 plant species identified as threatened and 3,087 species of conservation concern.

SOUTH AFRICA

The **Richtersveld Cultural and Botanical Landscape** is located in the dramatic mountainous desert of northwestern South Africa.

#VisitRichtersveld

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2007



For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1265>



RICHTERSVELD

CULTURAL AND BOTANICAL LANDSCAPE

Richtersveld sustains the semi-nomadic pastoral livelihood of the Nama people.

Richtersveld, South Africa © vaclav/stock.adobe.com*

It is one of the few areas in Southern Africa where transhumance pastoralism is still practiced. The Richtersveld Cultural and Botanical Landscape sustains the semi-nomadic pastoral livelihood of the Nama people, reflecting seasonal patterns that may have persisted for up to two millennia in Southern Africa. The Nama keep a strong oral tradition associated with the different places and attributes of this cultural and botanical landscape. It is the only area where the Nama still construct portable rush-mat houses, known as “Haru om”, and includes seasonal migrations and grazing grounds, together with stock posts.

SOUTH AFRICA

The **#Khomani Cultural Landscape** bears testimony to the way of life that prevailed in the region and shaped the site over thousands of years.

#Visit#Khomani

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2017



Archaeological sites in the dunes remain largely intact and the names of important places have been recorded and mapped.

For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1545>



‡KHOMANI CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

Located at the border of Botswana and Namibia in the northern part of South Africa, coinciding with the Kalahari Gemsbok National Park, this large expanse of sand dunes contains tangible evidence of human occupation from the Stone Age to present day. It is associated with the culture of the formerly nomadic ‡Khomani San people and the strategies that allowed them to adapt to harsh desert conditions. They developed specific ethnobotanical, cultural practices and a worldview related to the geographical features of the environment. The ‡Khomani Cultural Landscape bears testimony to the way of life that prevailed in the region and shaped the site over thousands of years.


San people, South Africa © Marina Sidorenko/stock.adobe.com*

SOUTH AFRICA

Situated in northeastern South Africa, the **Barberton Makhonjwa Mountains** comprise 40 per cent of the Barberton Greenstone Belt, one of the world's oldest geological structures.

#VisitBarbertonMakhonjwaMountains

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2018

A wide-angle landscape photograph of the Barberton Makhonjwa Mountains. The scene shows rolling hills and valleys covered in sparse, dry vegetation. The sky is filled with large, white, fluffy clouds. In the foreground, there are some green trees and a rocky outcrop.

The Barberton Makhonjwa Mountains contain an outstanding record of some of the oldest, most diverse, and best-preserved volcanic and sedimentary rocks on the early Earth.

For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1575>



BARBERTON MAKHONJWA MOUNTAINS

Barberton Makhonjwa Mountains, South Africa © Beate/stock.adobe.com*

The site is a diverse repository of information on surface conditions, meteorite impacts, volcanism, continent-building processes and the environment of early life. The Barberton Makhonjwa Mountains represent the best-preserved succession of volcanic and sedimentary rocks dating back 3.6 to 3.25 billion years ago.

These outcrops have been intensively studied for more than a century, and provide key insights into early Earth processes including the formation of continents, surface conditions, and the environment in which life first appeared on our planet.

UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

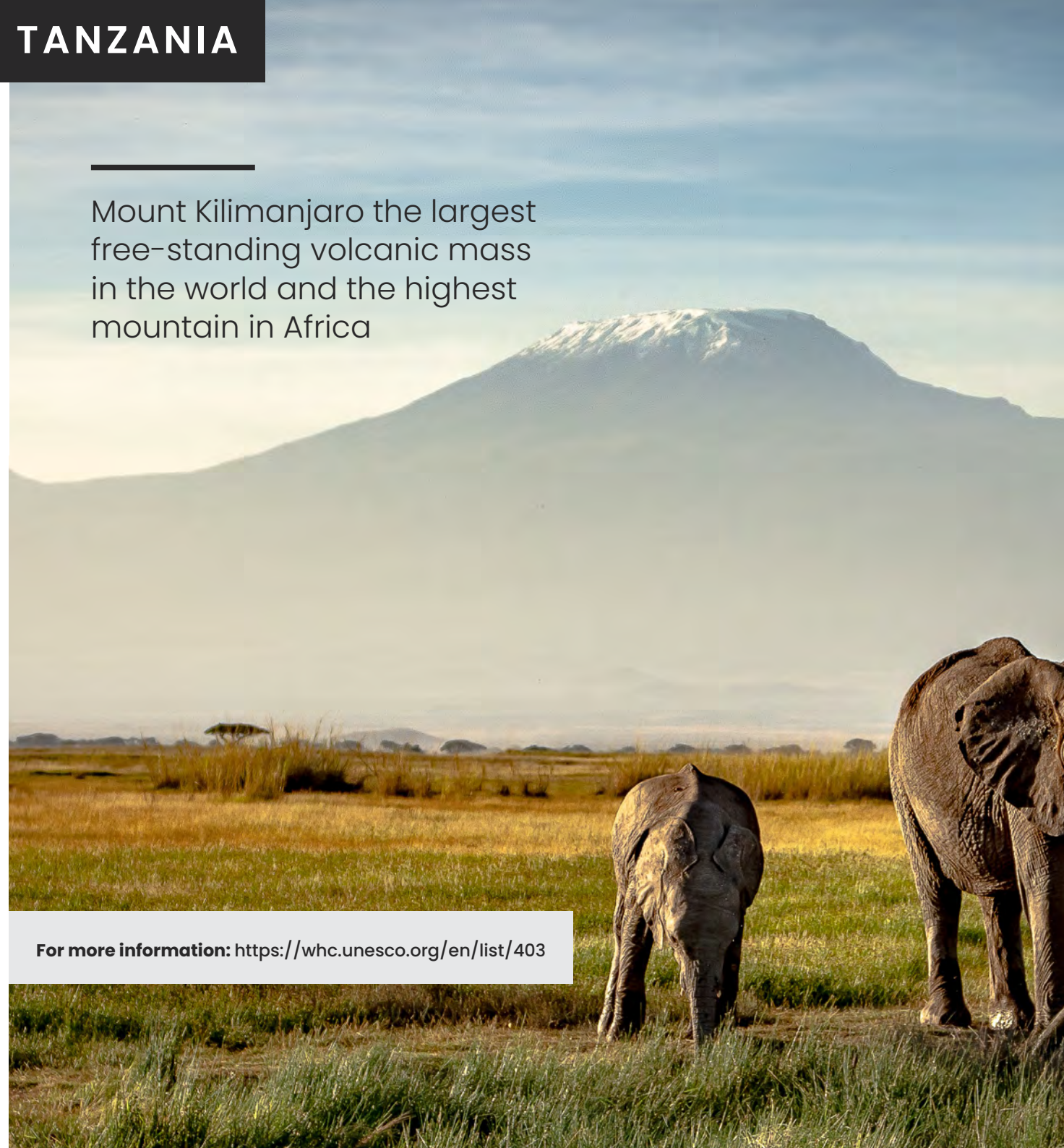
Mount Kilimanjaro is one of the largest volcanoes in the world and has five main vegetation zones from the lowest to the highest point.

#VisitKilimanjaro

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1987



Mount Kilimanjaro the largest free-standing volcanic mass in the world and the highest mountain in Africa



For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/403>

KILIMANJARO NATIONAL PARK

The Kilimanjaro National Park, covering an area of 75,575 hectares, protects the largest free-standing volcanic mass in the world and the highest mountain in Africa, rising 4,877 m above the surrounding plains to 5,895 m at its peak. Mount Kilimanjaro is one of the largest volcanoes in the world, and has five main vegetation zones from the lowest to the highest point: lower slopes, montane forest, heath and moorland, alpine desert and summit. The whole mountain, including the montane forest belt is rich in species, in particular mammals, many of them endangered species.

Kilimanjaro National Park, United Republic of Tanzania © CaPlanPhotography/stock.adobe.com*

UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

Located on the eastern slopes of the Maasai escarpment bordering the Great Rift Valley, the **Kondoa Rock-Art Sites** are testimony to the lives of hunter-gatherers and agriculturalists who have lived in the area for thousands of years.

#VisitKondoaRockArt

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2006



Rock paintings embody the cultures of both hunter-gatherer and pastoralist communities who have lived in the area over several millennia.


For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1183>



KONDOA ROCK-ART SITES

Some of the rock art sites are still used by local communities for a variety of ritual activities such as rainmaking, initiation ceremonies, divining and healing. These strong intangible relationships between the paintings and living practices reinforce the links with those societies that created the paintings and demonstrate a crucial cultural continuum.

The natural rock shelters, caves and overhanging cliff faces created by the slabs of sedimentary rocks fragmented by rift faults have been used for rock paintings for at least two millennia. The extensive collection of rock paintings display sequences that provide a unique testimony to the changing socio-economic base of the area, from hunter gatherer to agro-pastoralist societies, and the beliefs and ideas associated with them. The similarities with images from southern and central Africa, together with their distinctive streaky style and rare depiction of domesticated animals, make them examples of hunter-gatherer rock art at its northernmost limit.



Kondoa Rock-Art Sites, United Republic of Tanzania © UNESCO/Paul Joynton-Hicks

UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

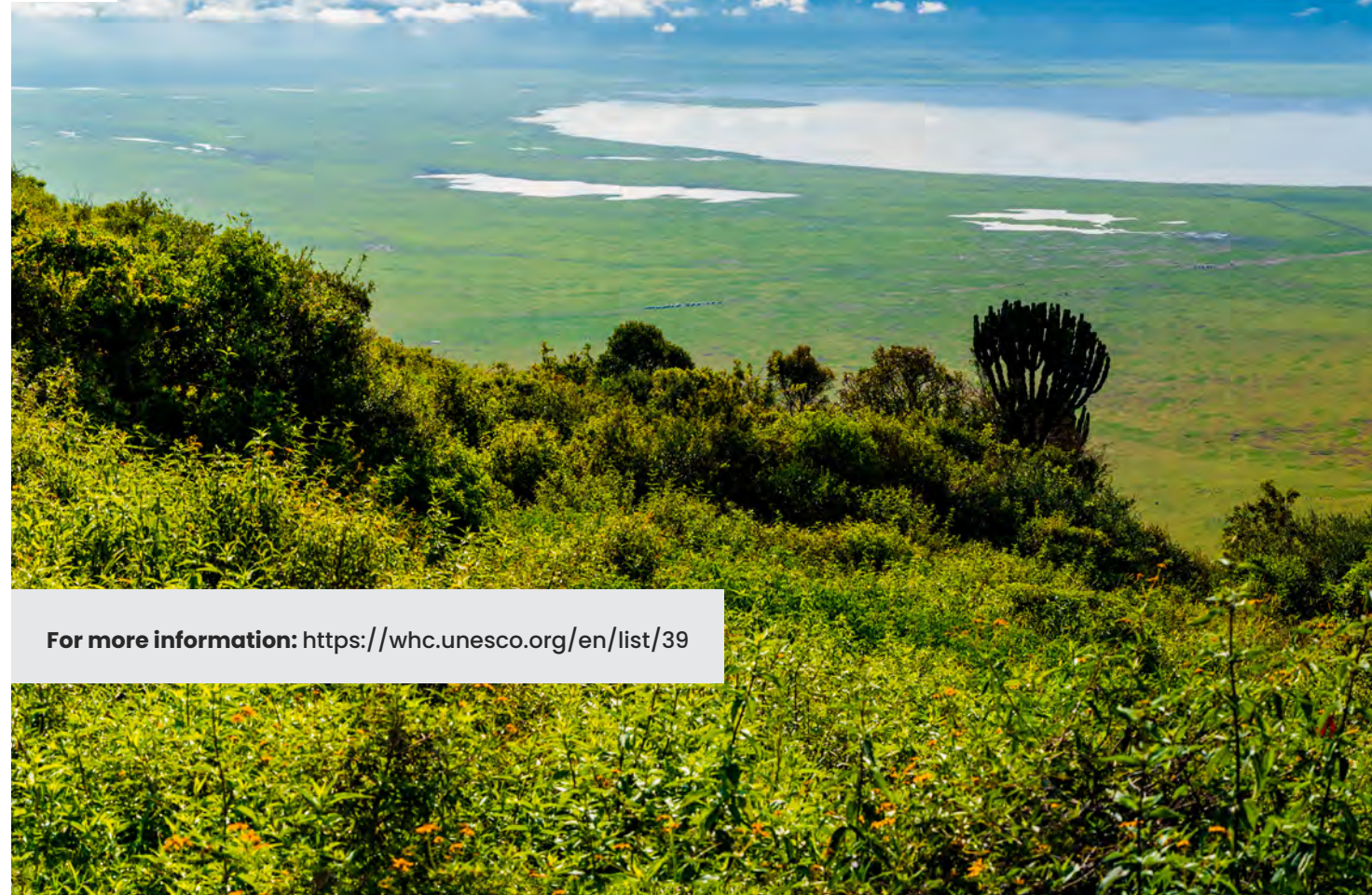
The **Ngorongoro Conservation Area** spans vast expanses of highland plains, savannah, savannah woodlands and forests, from the plains of the Serengeti National Park to the Great Rift Valley.

#VisitNgorongoro

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1979



The site hosts a long sequence of human evolution evidence and human-environmental dynamics, including early hominid footprint dating back 3.6 million years.



For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/39>

NGORONGORO

CONSERVATION AREA

The site has been instrumental in furthering understanding of early human evolution and the discovery of the earliest known specimens of the human genus, early hominidae and fossilised footprints associated with the development of human bipedalism.

The stunning landscape of the Ngorongoro Crater, combined with its spectacular concentration of wildlife, is one of the greatest natural wonders of the planet. Over 1 million wildebeest pass through the site as part of the annual migration across the Serengeti ecosystem, constituting one of the largest animal migrations on Earth. Ngorongoro Conservation Area is home to a population of some 25,000 large animals, mostly ungulates. This is alongside the highest density of African mammalian predators which includes the densest known population of lions. The site also harbours a range of endangered species such as the Black Rhino, the Wild Hunting Dog and the Golden Cat.

The Ngorongoro Conservation Area cannot be fully understood without considering the inseparable and historical link between the Maasai and the landscape, characterized by the dynamic and vibrant cultural practices, traditional architectural designs known as bomas, and evolving lifestyle rooted in nomadism.

Ngorongoro Crater, United Republic of Tanzania, © Ingusk/stock.adobe.com*

UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

The **Ruins of Kilwa Kisiwani and Songo Mnara** bear testimony to the expansion of Swahili coastal culture, the islamisation of East Africa and the extraordinarily extensive prosperous Indian Ocean trade from the medieval period up to the modern era.

#VisitKilwaKisiwani
#VisitSongoMnara

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1981



Kilwa Kisiwani was described by the great traveler Ibn Battuta in the 14th century as one of the most beautiful cities in the world and it reached its peak of prosperity in the 13th and 14th centuries.



For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/144>



RUINS OF KILWA KISIWANI AND SONGO MNARA

The Ruins of Kilwa Kisiwani and Songo Mnara, located on two islands close to each other just off the Tanzanian coast about 300 km south of Dar es Salaam, are important remains of two port cities. Kilwa Kisiwani was described by the great traveler Ibn Battuta in the 14th century as one of the most beautiful cities in the world and it reached its peak of prosperity in the 13th and 14th centuries. This port city, which came to mint its own currency, saw the beginning of its decline by the time that the Portuguese established a fort in the city.

Kilwa Kisiwani and Songo Mnara were Swahili trading cities. Their prosperity was based on the control of the Indian Ocean trade with Arabia, India and China between the 13th and 16th centuries. This was at a time when gold and ivory from the hinterland were traded for silver, carnelians, perfumes, Persian faience and Chinese porcelain. The two trading cities provide exceptional architectural, archaeological and documentary evidence of the growth of Swahili culture and commerce along the East African coast from the 9th to the 19th centuries.

Kilwa Kisiwani, United Republic of Tanzania, © travelview/stock.adobe.com*

UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

The **Selous Game Reserve** protects an impressive large mammal fauna, including globally significant populations of African elephants, black rhinoceros and wild hunting dogs.

#VisitSelousGameReserve

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1982



For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/199>



SELOUS GAME RESERVE

The sand rivers are the most unique features of the Selous landscape.

Selous Game Reserve, United Republic of Tanzania, © Rob/stock.adobe.com*

The Selous Game Reserve, covering over 50,000 km², is one of the largest remaining wilderness areas in Africa, with relatively undisturbed ecological and biological processes, including a diverse range of wildlife. The site contains a great diversity of vegetation types including rocky acacia-clad hills, gallery and ground water forests, swamps and low rain forests, and of particular importance, the deciduous Miombo woodlands. The Selous Game Reserve has a higher density and diversity of species than any other Miombo woodland area: with more than 2,100 plants recorded and more are thought to exist in the remote forests in the south. Because of this fire-climax vegetation, soils are subject to erosion when there are heavy rains, which result in a network of normally dry rivers of sand that become raging torrents during the rains.

The site protects an impressive large mammal fauna, including globally significant populations of African elephants, black rhinoceros and wild hunting dogs. It also includes one of the world's largest known populations of hippopotamuses and buffalos. The site also harbours one of the most significant concentrations of cheetahs, giraffes, Nile crocodiles, sable antelopes, hartebeest, greater kudu and elands, among many other species. Resultantly, the Selous Game Reserve is a natural habitat of outstanding importance for in-situ conservation of biological diversity.

UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

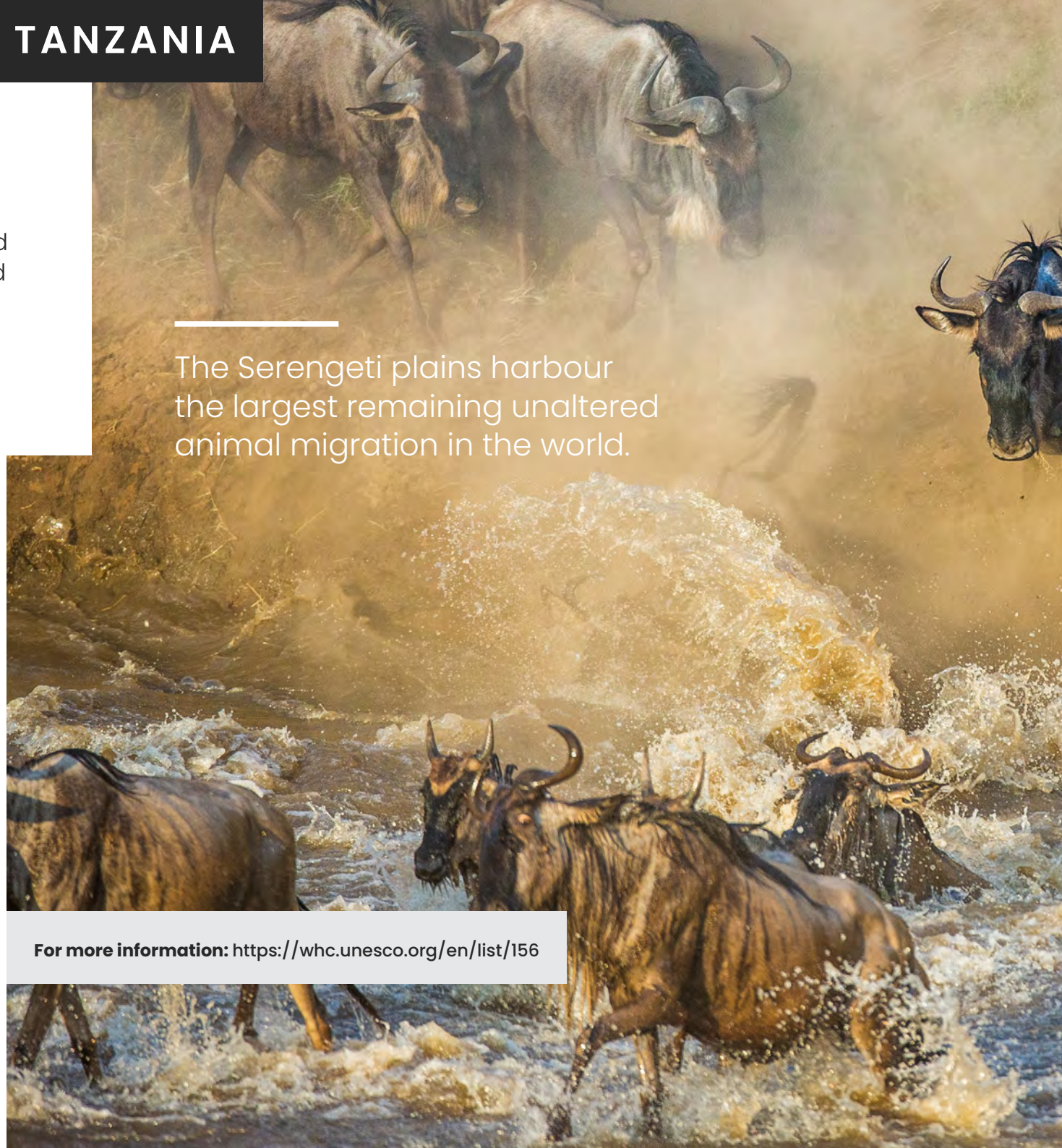
The **Serengeti National Park** is one of the most impressive nature spectacles relating to the largest remaining unaltered animal migration in search of pasture and water in the world.

#VisitSerengeti

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1981



The Serengeti plains harbour the largest remaining unaltered animal migration in the world.



For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/156>



SERENGETI NATIONAL PARK

Two million wildebeest and hundreds of thousands of other ungulates, such as gazelles and zebras, engage in a 1,000 km long annual circular trek, accompanied by their predators, which chase them during this journey. This spectacular phenomenon takes place in a unique scenic setting of endless plains: 25,000 km² of treeless expanses of spectacularly flat short grasslands dotted with rocky outcrops, also known as “kopjes”, interspersed with rivers and woodlands.

The combination of volcanic soils and the ecological impact of migration results in one of the most productive ecosystems on earth, sustaining the largest number of ungulates and the highest concentration of large predators in the world. Other herbivores include an impressive number of elands, hartebeest, buffaloes, giraffes, warthogs, waterbucks, African elephants, hippopotamuses, black rhinoceros, 10 species of antelopes and 10 species of primates. The Serengeti National Park has the highest ostrich population in Africa making the population globally important. Major predators include lions, leopards, cheetahs, spotted hyenas and wild dogs. Of these, the black rhino, leopard, African elephant and cheetah are listed in the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species.

Wildebeest Migration, United Republic of Tanzania, © gudkovandrey/stock.adobe.com*

UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

The **Stone Town of Zanzibar**, located on a promontory jutting out from the western side of Unguja island into the Indian Ocean, is an outstanding example of a Swahili trading town.

#VisitZanzibar

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2000

A close-up photograph of a highly ornate wooden door. The door is made of dark wood and features intricate carvings, including a central vertical column with a face and floral motifs. The door is secured with several rows of metal studs, some of which are brass and have a bulbous, decorative shape. The surrounding walls are made of light-colored stone or plaster, showing signs of age and wear.

The Stone Town of Zanzibar is an outstanding material manifestation of cultural fusion and harmonization.

For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/173>

A photograph of a narrow, paved alleyway in Stone Town, Zanzibar. The walls are made of aged, weathered stone and plaster, with some windows featuring metal grilles. A man wearing a white thobe and a patterned kumma is walking away from the camera down the center of the alley. The lighting is bright, suggesting daytime.

STONE TOWN OF ZANZIBAR

For many centuries, the intense seaborne trading activity between Asia and Africa, influenced the architecture and urban structure of Stone Town, which has kept its urban fabric and townscape virtually intact and contains many fine buildings that reflect the harmony between the cultures of Africa, the Arab region, India, and Europe for more than a millennium.

The buildings of Stone Town, built principally in coralline ragstone and mangrove timber, set in a thick lime mortar, plastered and lime-washed, include monuments such as the Old Fort, built on the site of an earlier Portuguese church, the House of Wonder, a large ceremonial palace built by Sultan Barghash; the Old Dispensary; St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Cathedral; and the Christ Church Anglican Cathedral, commemorating the work of David Livingstone in abolishing the slave trade and built on the site of the last slave market.

No experience of Stone Town is complete without tasting the local cuisine, which also reflects the long history between the peoples who inhabited the island and whose culinary practices transmitted through generations constitute a veritable living heritage.

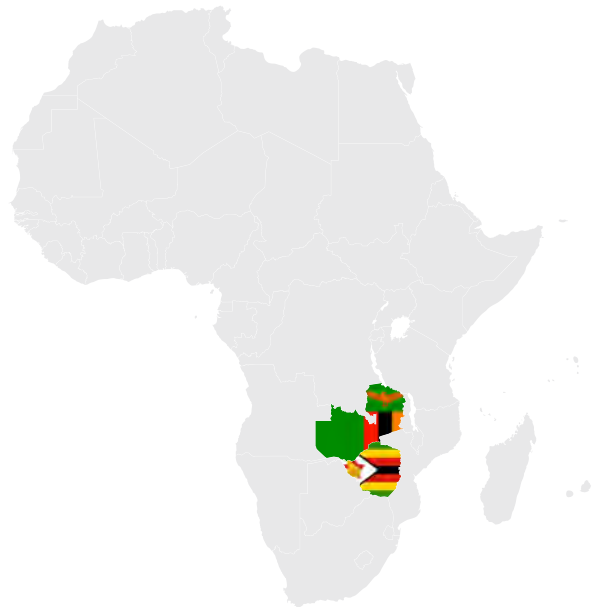
Stone Town, United Republic of Zanzibar © SearchingForSatori/stock.adobe.com*

ZAMBIA AND ZIMBABWE

Mosi-oa-Tunya / Victoria Falls, a transboundary World Heritage site on the border of Zambia and Zimbabwe, is the world's greatest sheet of falling water, renowned worldwide for its exceptional geological and geomorphological features as well as its active land formation processes of over 6,860 hectares.

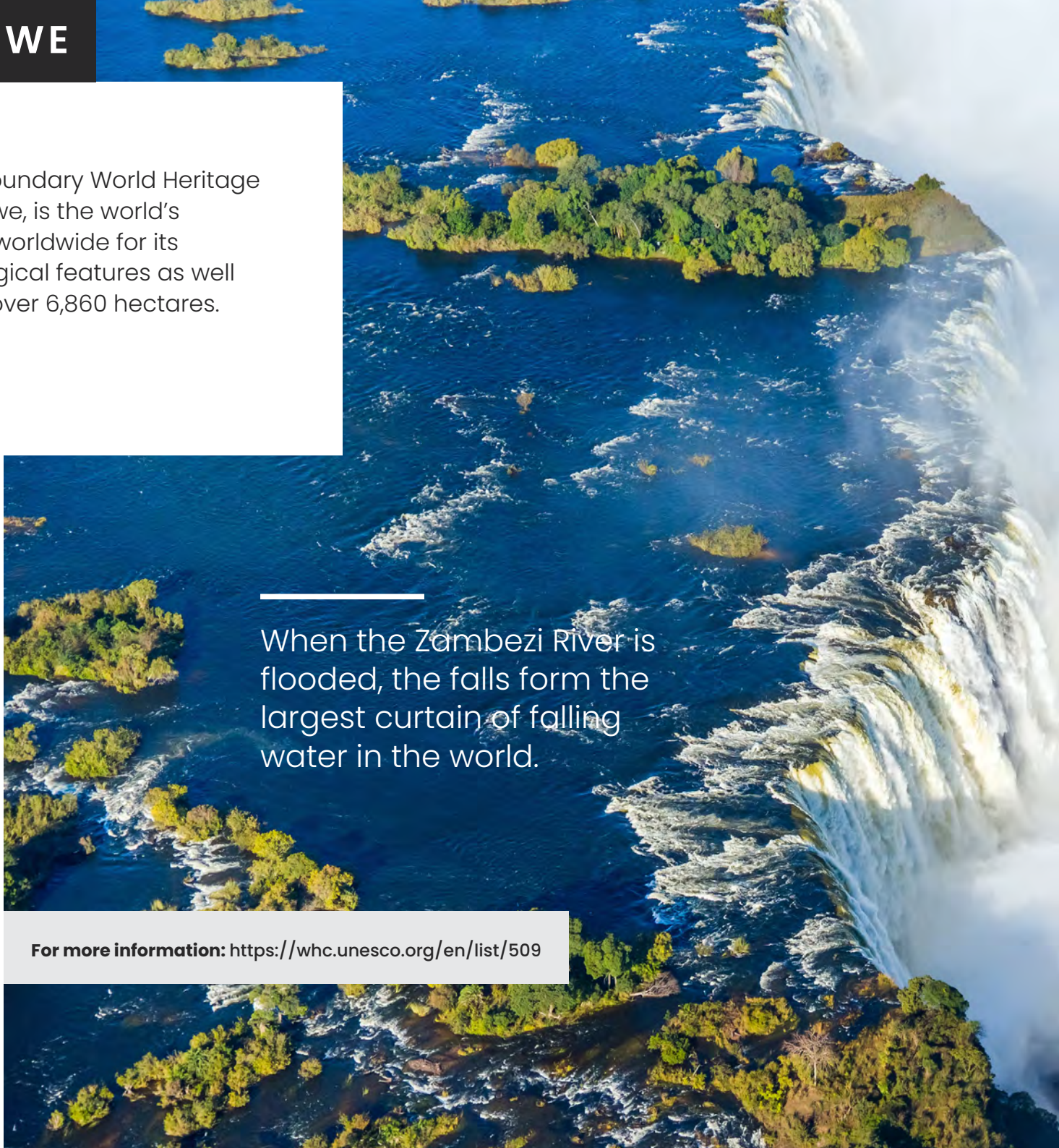
#VisitVictoriaFalls

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1989




When the Zambezi River is flooded, the falls form the largest curtain of falling water in the world.

For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/509>





MOSI-OA-TUNYA/ VICTORIA FALLS



The Zambezi River, which is more than 2 km wide at this point, plunges thunderously down a series of basalt gorges, raising an iridescent mist that can be seen 20 km away. The waterfalls, locally known as Mosi-oa-Tunya (the smoke that thunders) have an altitude of about 915 m and span 1,708 m, with an average depth of 100 m. When the Zambezi River is flooded, usually around February or March, the falls form the largest curtain of falling water in the world.

The waterfalls are a result of the basalts that have been cut by a river system producing a series of basalt gorges, which also serve as breeding sites for four species of endangered bird. These gorges follow a zig-zag course along Zambezi River for about 150 km below the falls. For the local Tonga community, the Zambezi River system and its environs is venerated as a sacred and important place to their spirituality and livelihoods.

Victoria Falls, Zambia © Anna/stock.adobe.com*

ZAMBIA

The **Budima Dance** is a warrior dance performed all year round by the Wee people on a number of spiritual occasions and ceremonies, especially during traditional ceremonies, funeral processions, weddings, initiation ceremonies, the installation of chiefs, thanksgiving, harvest celebrations and ritual activities.

#VisitZambia

Inscribed on the Representative List of
Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in
2020



For more information: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/budima-dance-01567>



Budima dance, Zambia © Mutelo Yuyi, Zambia, 2019*

The related knowledge and skills of Budima Dance are transmitted to young people through observation and their participation in the dance. Young people are also taught about the importance of the dance, how to perform it, and how to make some of the instruments during initiation ceremonies.

BUDIMA DANCE

The dance is performed with spears, whistles, walking sticks, knobkerries, flutes, ceremonial axes, shields, horns/trumpets, drums and rattles. The performance includes men, women, and children: the men represent skilled soldiers or fighters with long spears jumping up and down while running in and out of the inner circle of dangers, flourishing their spears in mimic of war, while others blow the sets of one-note antelope horn flutes/trumpets and shout chants. Others play big and small drums. The women- adorned in beaded necklaces and bangles, with rattles on their feet - sing along and dance energetically. The Budima dance serves as a unifying factor for the communities concerned, who take great pride in the dance and can join in with the dancers at any point during the performance.

ZAMBIA

The **Makishi masquerade** is performed at the end of the mukanda, an annual initiation ritual for boys between the ages of eight and twelve.

#VisitZambia

Inscribed on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2008 (originally proclaimed in 2005)



For more information: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/makishi-masquerade-00140>



The mukanda has an educational function of transmitting practical survival-skills as well as knowledge about nature, sexuality, religious beliefs and the social values of the community.

MAKISHI MASQUERADE

Makishi masquerade, Zambia © Tenara Banda/ Zambia National Commission for UNESCO, 2010*

This ritual is celebrated by the Vaka Chiyama Cha Mukwamayi communities, which include the Luvala, Chokwe, Luchazi and Mbunda peoples, who live in the northwestern and western provinces of Zambia. Usually at the beginning of the dry season, the young boys leave their homes and live for one to three months in an isolated bush camp. This separation from the outside world marks the end of their childhood. The mukanda involves the circumcision of the initiates, tests of courage and lessons on their future role in the community. Each initiate is assigned a specific masked character, which remains with him throughout the entire process.

ZAMBIA

Mooba is the main dance of the Lenje ethnic group of Central Province of Zambia, performed since precolonial times.

#VisitZambia

Inscribed on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2018



For more information: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/mooba-dance-of-the-lenje-ethnic-group-of-central-province-of-zambia-01372>



Mooba dance of the Lenje ethnic group of Central Province of Zambia
© Victor Makashi/Department of Arts and Culture, Zambia, 2017

The Lenje community has also established groups that perform wherever they are invited, helping to promote the practice further afield.

MOOBA DANCE

OF THE LENJE ETHNIC GROUP OF CENTRAL PROVINCE OF ZAMBIA

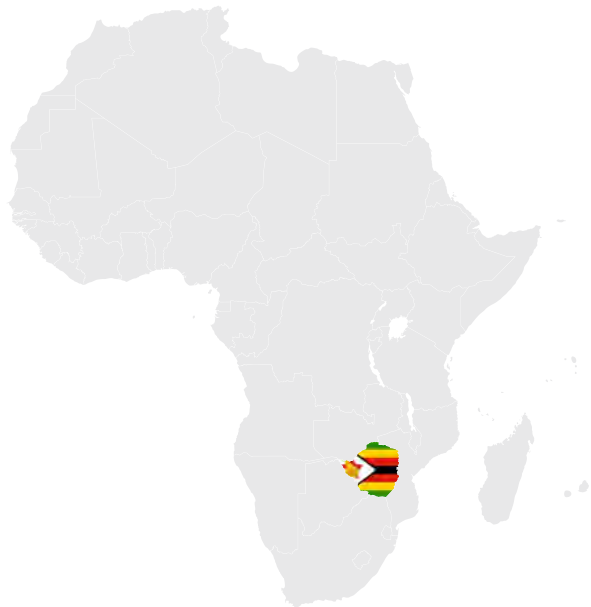
It is also practised in parts of Copperbelt and Lusaka Provinces, by both men and women. On certain occasions, when the dance reaches its peak, some lead dancers are possessed by ancestral spirits called BaChooba; it is said that, at this point, the spirits take the lead in dictating the flow of the dance, drumming and singing. Both male and female dancers can be possessed with BaChooba spirits.

ZIMBABWE

Great Zimbabwe National Monument, located near the town of Masvingo, is an outstanding example of an ancient city renowned as a trading center during the Middle Ages.

#VisitGreatZimbabwe

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1986



The impressive ruins of the Great Zimbabwe National Monument are among the largest and oldest in the subcontinent.



For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/364>

GREAT ZIMBABWE NATIONAL MONUMENT

The prosperity of Great Zimbabwe is thought to be connected to local agricultural commerce as well as trade with the port of Kilwa on the East African coast. Exchange trade items, such as gold, jewelry, pottery, ivory, iron and copper tools, from as far as China and Persia have been discovered through excavations at the site.

The site, covering almost 800 hectares, was built between 1100 and 1450 using granite and brick. Around 1450, the capital was abandoned due to the effects of deforestation in the hinterland, which could no longer furnish food for the overpopulated city. The resulting migration benefitted Khami, which became the most influential city in the region.

Great Zimbabwe National Monument is made up of three functional areas: the Hill Ruins, the Great Enclosure and the Valley Ruins. The Hill Ruins are the oldest and consist of a huge boulder and an eastern and western enclosure thought to have been a royal residence and ritual centre. The Great Enclosure, which is located at the south of the hills, contains central structures surrounded by an inner outer wall with a conical tower between them. The Valley Ruins comprise upper and lower complexes of brick and dry-stone masonry. These were residential areas that could accommodate between ten and twenty thousand people.

Great Zimbabwe National Monument, Zimbabwe
© ragnarok79/stock.adobe.com*

ZIMBABWE

People have interacted with and been inspired by the dramatic natural rock formations of the **Matobo Hills** for thousands of years.

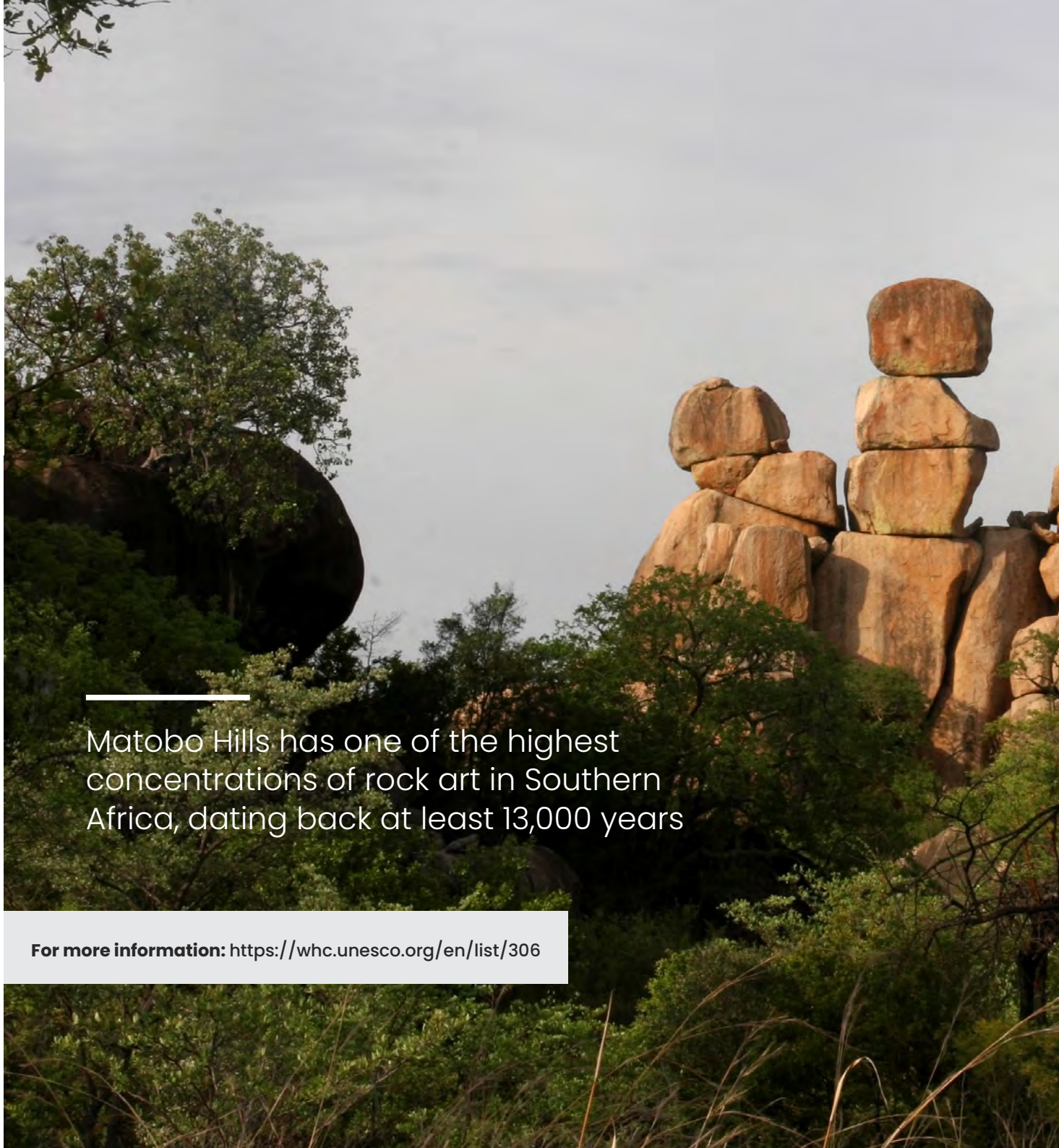
#VisitMatoboHills

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2003



Matobo Hills has one of the highest concentrations of rock art in Southern Africa, dating back at least 13,000 years

For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/306>





MATOBO HILLS

The Matobo Hills are located about 35 km south of Bulawayo. It has one of the highest concentrations of rock art in Southern Africa, dating back at least 13,000 years. The paintings illustrate evolving artistic styles and socio-religious beliefs. They provide a full picture of the lives of foraging societies in the Stone Age, as well as the way in which agricultural societies replaced them.

The site is characterized by a profusion of distinctive granite landforms that rise up to form a sea of hills. The landforms are densely packed into a comparatively tight area. Their forms have resulted from the varied composition and alignment of the granite rocks, which responded differently to millions of years of weathering. People have interacted with and been inspired by the dramatic natural rock formations of the Matobo Hills for thousands of years. This interaction has produced one of the most outstanding rock art collections in Southern Africa, and has fostered strong religious beliefs, which still play a major role in contemporary local communities.

The Mwari religion, which dates back to the Iron Age, is still practiced in the area and is the most powerful oracular tradition in Southern Africa. The Matobo rocks are revered as the seat of god and ancestral spirits. The shrines built within the hills are conceived as places where contact can be made with the spiritual world.

Matobo Hills, Zimbabwe © vladislav333222/stock.adobe.com*

ZIMBABWE

Mana Pools National Park, Sapi and Chewore Safari Areas is known for an annual congregation of animals in riparian parkland alongside the broad Zambezi River, which constitute one of Africa's outstanding wildlife spectacles.

#VisitManaPools

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1984



The river is also famous for its sizable numbers of hippopotamus, Nile crocodile, and some 450 species of resident and migratory birdlife.



For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/302>



MANA POOLS NATIONAL PARK

SAPI AND CHEWORE SAFARI AREAS

The 'sand-bank' environment constitutes a good example of erosion and deposition by a large seasonal river, resulting in a clear pattern of vegetation succession on the alluvial deposits.

Territorially protected by the Zambezi River to the north and the steep escarpment, rising to over 1,000 m from the valley floor, to the south, this site of 676,600 hectares provides shelter for an outstanding congregation of Africa's large mammal populations, which concentrate in its flood plains. Yearly, during the dry winter months, predators such as lions and hyenas migrate to the area along with large herds of elephants, buffalos, zebras, waterbucks and many other antelope species.

ZIMBABWE

Located to the west of the Khami River, about 22 km from Bulawayo, **Khami Ruins National Monument** is the second largest stone-built monument in Zimbabwe.

#VisitKhamiRuins

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1986



For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/365>



KHAMI RUINS NATIONAL MONUMENT

The site is a unique and exceptional testimony to a civilization which has disappeared.

Khami ruins, Zimbabwe © bayazed/stock.adobe.com*

Khami was the capital of the Torwa dynasty for about 200 years from around 1450, arising from the great collapse of the Great Zimbabwe Kingdom and was abandoned during the Ndebele incursions in the 19th century. The archaeological remains are also a testament to long-distance historic trade links with the Portuguese and the wider world, which witnessed the arrival of a diverse range of imported artefacts between the 15th and 17th centuries. These included Spanish porcelain, Rhineland stoneware and Ming porcelain, many of which are on display in the Museum of Natural History in Bulawayo. A monumental granite cross, which illustrates the contact with missionaries, can be found in the site.

Khami Ruins National Monument is located on a 1,300 m hilltop downstream of the Khami dam and covers an area of about 108 hectares. It is composed of a complex series of platforms of dry-stone walled structures, emulating a later development of Stone Age culture.

ZIMBABWE

The **Mbende Jerusarema Dance** is a popular dance style practiced by the Zezuru Shona people living in eastern Zimbabwe, especially in the Murewa and Uzumba-Maramba-Pfungwe districts.

#VisitZimbabwe

Inscribed on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2008 (originally proclaimed in 2005)

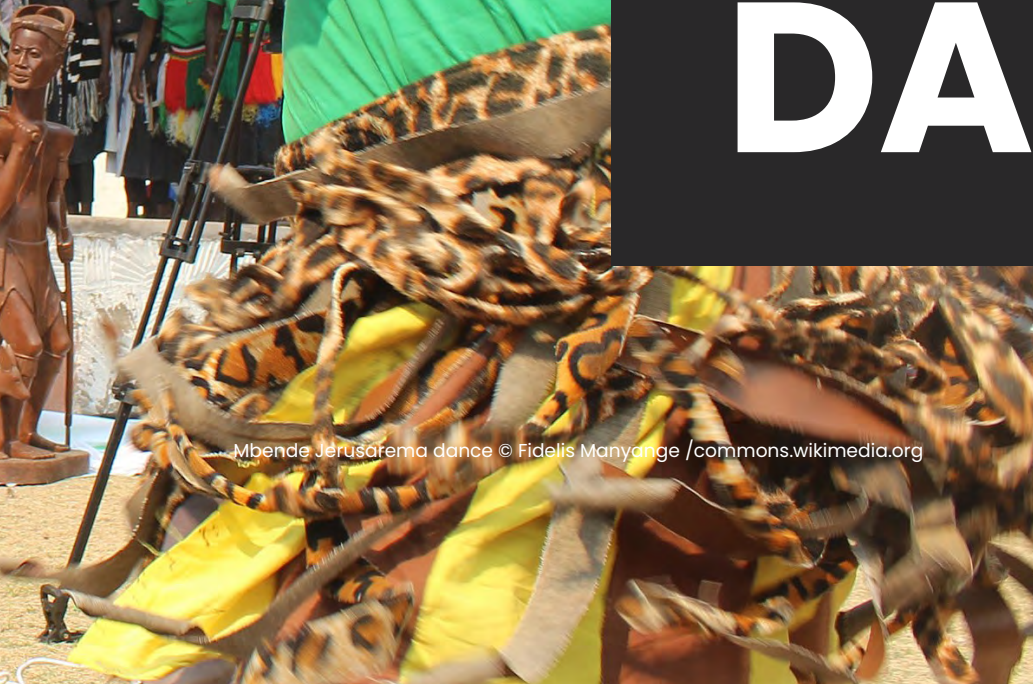


For more information: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/mbende-jerusarema-dance-00169>



The dance is changing its character and meaning as its enactment as an exotic animation for tourist audiences becomes more widespread.

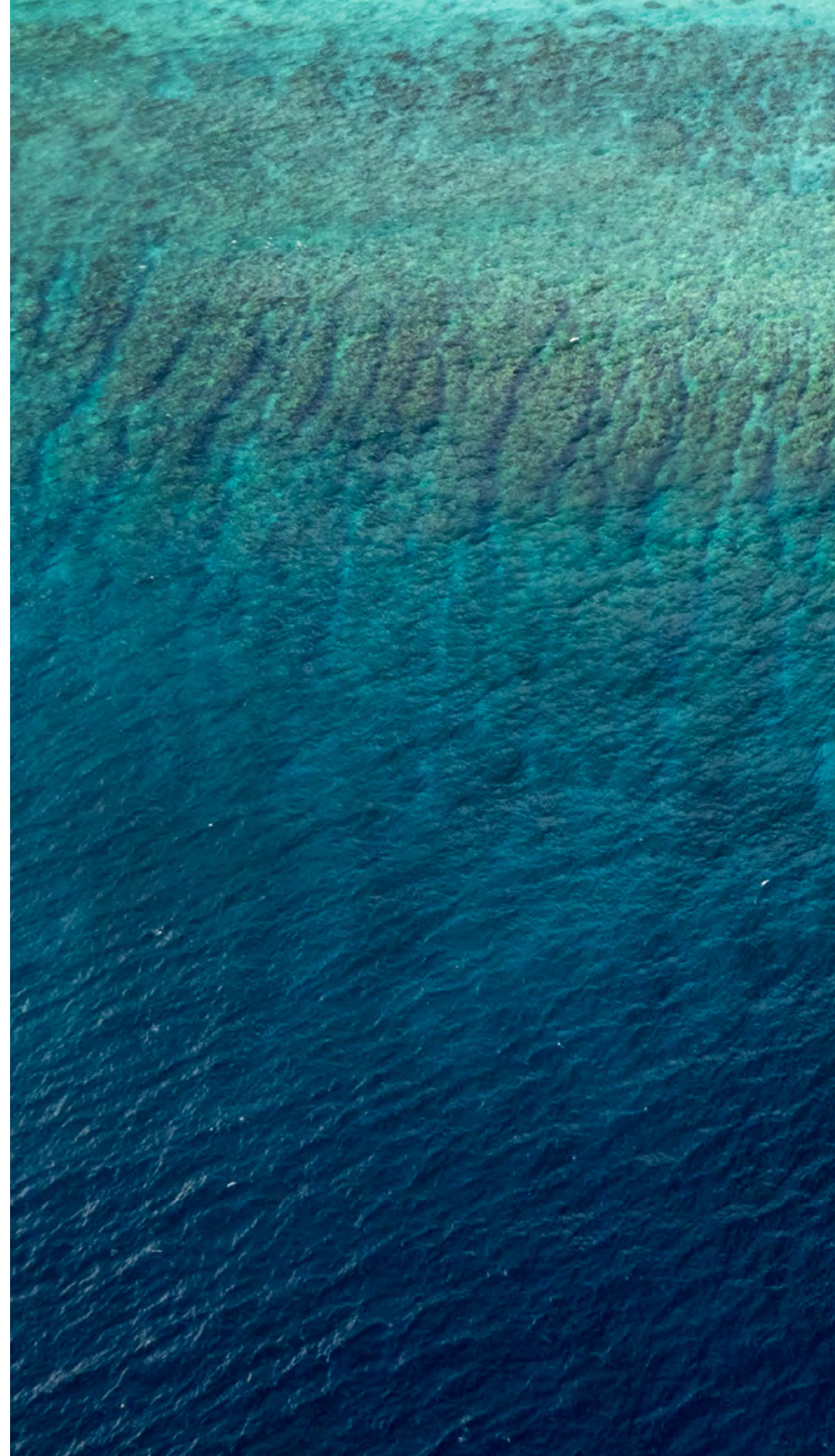
MBENDE JERUSAREMA DANCE



Mbende Jerusarema dance © Fidelis Manyange /commons.wikimedia.org

The dance is characterized by acrobatic and sensual movements by women and men, driven by a polyrhythmic drummer accompanied by men playing woodblock clappers and by women hand clapping, yodelling and blowing whistles. Unlike other drum based East African dance styles, the Mbende Jerusarema does not rely on intricate foot stamping or a large number of drummers. Instead, the music is performed by one master drummer, and no songs or lyrics are involved.

Sites Inscribed on the National Tentative Lists of Comoros and Eswatini

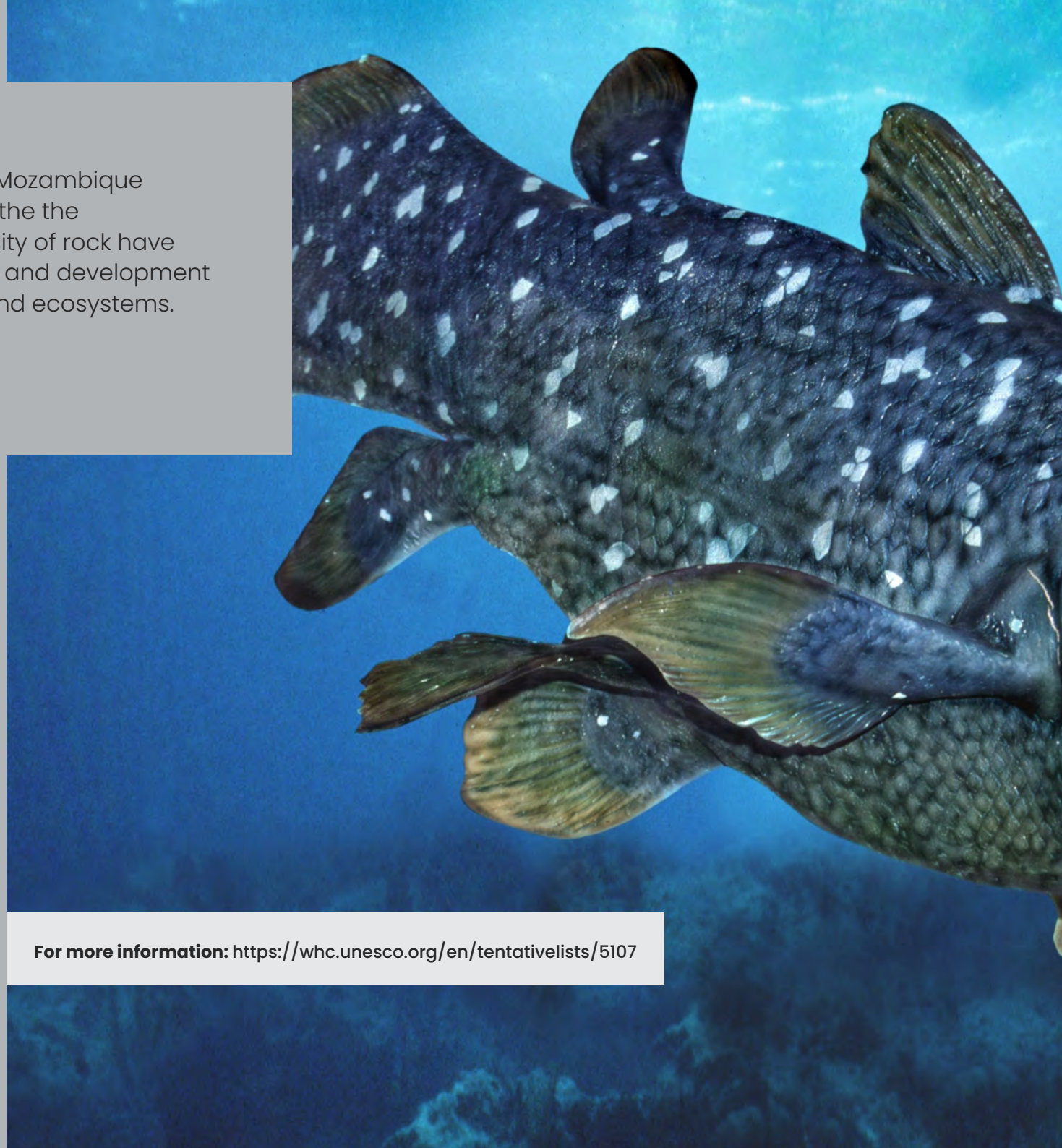


COMOROS

Located in the Indian Ocean, north of the Mozambique Channel, the interaction of waters that bathe the **archipelago of the Comoros** with a diversity of rock have enabled the establishment, diversification and development of complex and original marine species and ecosystems.

#VisitComoros

Inscribed on the National Tentative List of Comoros



For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5107>

MARINE ECOSYSTEMS OF THE COMOROS ARCHIPELAGO



Coelacanth, Comoros © slowmotiongli/stock.adobe.com*

The Comorian coastal environment includes coral or volcanic sand beaches, lagoons, coral reefs and mangroves. The latter are home to important biodiversity, including oysters, sea cucumbers, crabs, and periophthalmus. It is also inhabited by diverse animal and plant species, often endemic, including rare or endangered species.

The archipelago of the Comoros is home to the coelacanth, a living fossil, endemic and endangered species which has an immense ecological and scientific interest. It is also a breeding site for whales and for the endangered Sirenian dugong, sea turtles, seabirds and madrepores.

The archipelago of the Comoros is home to the coelacanth, a living fossil.

COMOROS

The **Comoros archipelago** is an eminently representative example of ongoing geological processes due to its origin.

#VisitComoros

Inscribed on the National Tentative List of Comoros



The Comoros archipelago has been continuously inhabited by human communities for more than a thousand years.




For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5108>





TERRESTRIAL ECOSYSTEMS AND CULTURAL LANDSCAPE OF THE COMOROS ARCHIPELAGO



The Comoros archipelago presents a complete staging of natural environments of exceptional diversity, ranging from abyssal depths of 3,000 m under the sea level to mountain peaks of 2,360 m. The resultant landscapes are of exceptional beauty with contrasting mountain and sea-scapes, steep and rugged slopes covered with extraordinary vegetation, waterfalls and canyons, beaches and reefs. The terrestrial fauna and flora reveal a large number of endemic species, subspecies and genera for which the Comoros constitute natural or exclusive habitats, including Livingstone's foxes, birds, lizards, and orchids.

As the Comoros archipelago has been continuously inhabited by human communities for more than a thousand years, the islands' slopes are the site of a fusion of natural and cultural elements that is reflected in the integration of agroforestry growing areas into the natural forest environment, constituting a remarkable living cultural landscape.

Comoros © mbrand85 / stock.adobe.com*

COMOROS

The **cultural landscape of the Moon Islands Perfume Plantations** illustrates a living evolutionary cultural landscape that retains an active social role in contemporary society.

#VisitMoonIslands

Inscribed on the National Tentative List of Comoros



The cultivation of perfume plants is a major feature of the economic exploitation of the Comoros archipelago, and in particular, Anjouan.

For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5110>



CULTURAL LANDSCAPE OF THE PERFUME PLANTATIONS OF THE MOON ISLANDS

The cultural landscape of the Moon Islands Perfume Plantations illustrates a living evolutionary cultural landscape that retains an active social role in contemporary society and remains closely associated with the traditional way of life of rural Comorian populations. Set up by the French colonists, the production of essential oils and odorous products is a cash crop that has strongly marked the agricultural structure of the island, forming a lasting part of its landscape. This activity includes tree plantations, including ylang-ylang, cloves, bigarradiers and bergamot trees, or perfume plants, including lemongrass, jasmine, geranium, basil and vanilla.

Ylang-Ylang, Comoros © chaiudon/stock.adobe.com*

COMOROS

The **Historic Sultanates of Comoros** comprise five cities: Mutsamudu, Domoni, Itsandra, Iconi and Moroni.

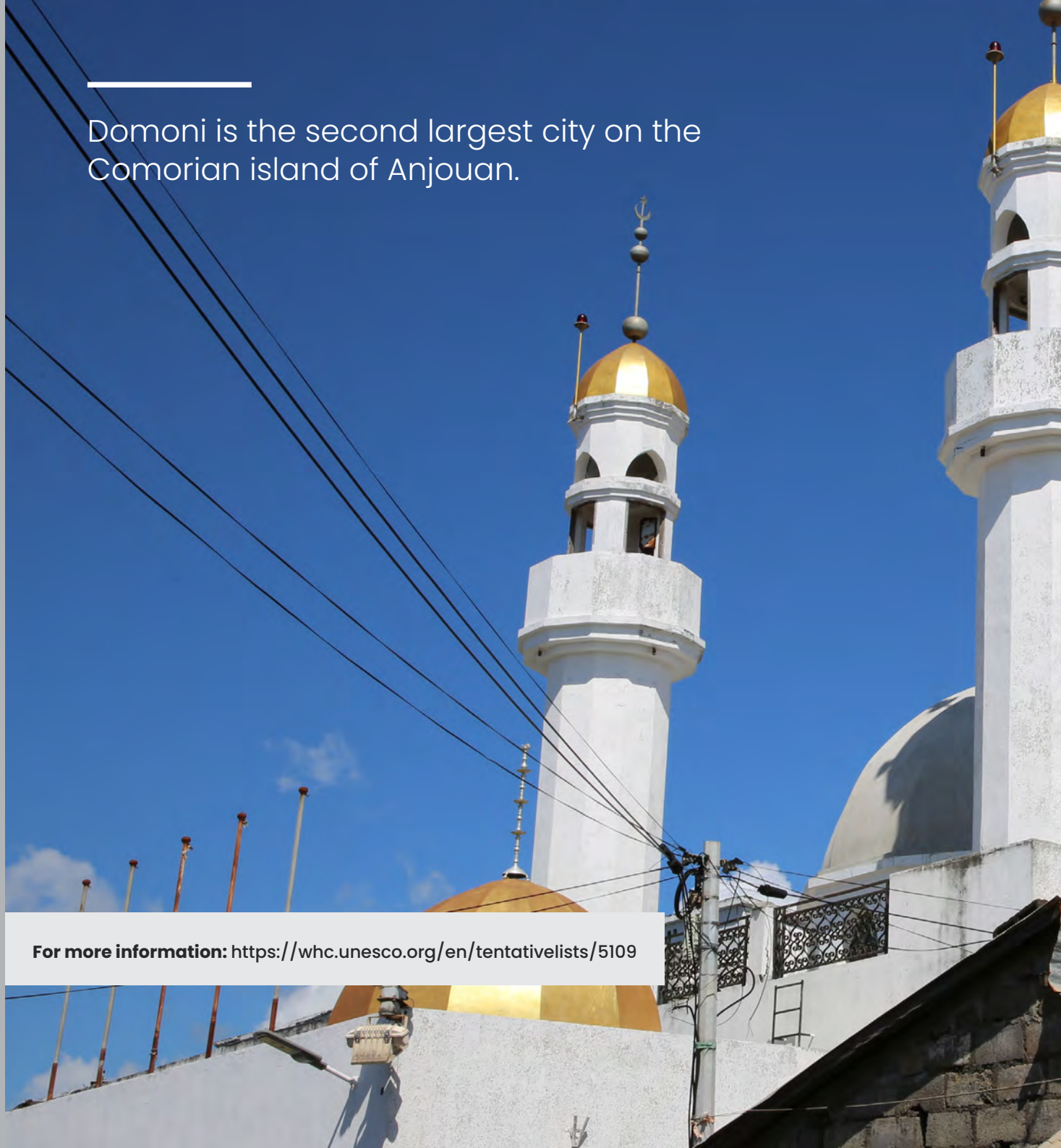
#VisitHistoricSultanates

Inscribed on the National Tentative List of Comoros



Domoni is the second largest city on the Comorian island of Anjouan.

For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5109>



HISTORIC SULTANATES OF COMOROS

Though noticeably different in size, the five cities comprising the Historic Sultanates of Comoros present a similar architectural ensemble in their built space, narrow streets, carved doors, mosques, palaces, defensive walls, mausoleums and public spaces.

ESWATINI

Ngwenya Mine constitutes one of the oldest iron ore deposits and geological formations in the world, possibly representing one of the world's earliest mining activities.

#VisitNgwenya

Inscribed on the National Tentative List of Eswatini



This mine is known to be one of the oldest iron ore deposits and geological formations in the world.



For more information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5421>

Ngwenya Iron Ore Mine, Eswatini © demerzel21/stock.adobe.com*

NGWENYA MINE

Ngwenya Mine, situated on the northwestern border of Eswatini, dates back to 42,000 years BC and was the source of the red ochre and specularite used by San communities, which flourished in Southern Africa for about 100,000 years, in painting. The mine was a catalyst in the industrial and economic development of Eswatini and is a testimony of the development of ancient traditional industries in Southern Africa that influenced the whole sub-region by introducing gradual change from stone tools to iron.

Heritage under threat

Armed conflict and war, earthquakes and other natural disasters, pollution, poaching, uncontrolled urbanization and unchecked tourist development pose major problems to World Heritage sites.

The Southern Africa region is not an exception. In the region, six sites have been inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger, which is designed to inform the international community of conditions that threaten the very characteristics for which a site was inscribed on the World Heritage List and to encourage corrective action. They include Garamba National Park, Kahuzi-Biega National Park, Okapi Wildlife Reserve and Virunga National Park in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; Selous Game Reserve in the United Republic of Tanzania; and the Rainforests of the Atsinanana in Madagascar.

Southern Africa is home to a myriad of impressive national parks that continue to experience threats from poachers and depleting numbers of wild animals.

For example, Selous Game Reserve in the United Republic of Tanzania has been plundered with industrial-scale ivory poaching, decimating the once abundant elephant herds. Furthermore, Kahuzi-Biega National Park and Virunga National Park in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; Selous Game Reserve in the United Republic of Tanzania; Mana Pools National Park, Sapi and Chewore Safari Areas in Zimbabwe are increasingly threatened by commercial mining and oil/gas projects.

In order to mitigate some of these risks, UNESCO has put in place several measures to protect and preserve World Heritage, such as the identification of buffer zones. These are tools that encourage the protection of the surroundings areas of inscribed properties and are an essential component of the conservation strategy for cultural and natural sites alike. Additionally, UNESCO works with site managers, park rangers and national focal points on World Heritage sites to run capacity-building programs on implementing the 1972 World Heritage Convention and its related recommendations and instruments. These programmes focus on heritage awareness for communities, research, conservation and protection measures.

Similar to sites inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger, the region has several examples of elements inscribed on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding. In this context, Botswana successfully listed all of its elements on the List, namely Earthenware pottery-making skills from the Kgatleng District, Dikopelo folk music of Bakgatla ba Kgafela in Kgatleng District and Seperu folkdance and associated practices. In the case of Mauritius, Sega tambour Chagos was also inscribed on the List.

Earthenware pottery-making skills from the Kgatleng District in Botswana are in need of urgent safeguarding due to the low transmission rate and reduced demand for pots as people mainly use plastic and metal containers to store water and brew traditional beer. While Chagossians have striven to safeguard Sega tambour Chagos in Mauritius, there are numerous threats to its viability, including the passing away of elders, young people turning to other music genres and displacement leading to a loss of memory.

To address these risks, UNESCO encourages countries to have robust safeguarding plans, as they are useful to ensure the transmission and viability of intangible cultural heritage elements under threat in the region. In the case of Botswana, the Bakgatla ba Kgafela safeguarding plan highlights several key objectives to strengthen traditional clay pot-making and encourage its transmission and revitalization. These include identifying knowledge bearers, raising awareness among the community of the importance of protecting areas where raw materials are found and promoting the value and status of rituals and religious practices associated with traditional clay pot-making. The development of quality standards for earthenware products and marketing strategies has been particularly important to support the related creative industries, as has the transmission of skills to ensure the safeguarding of the element. Thus, courses at educational institutions were organized, and existing pottery practitioners were accredited so that they could be engaged as tutors or trainers in learning institutions.



Thank you

We would like to thank you for taking time to appreciate the heritage in our region.

Southern Africa has the alluring appeal of all-yearlong tourism activities including beautiful coastal lines, thriving national parks with an array of flora and fauna, amazing cuisine and warm hospitality. This publication has proven that beyond the bountiful natural heritage in the region, there is an opportunity to experience cultural heritage that is unique to any other destination in the world.

We hope that as you plan your visit you consider the importance of sustainable tourism practices. For UNESCO, sustainable tourism is tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities.

#SeeYouSoon





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FROM ANGOLA TO ZIMBABWE

Southern Africa is home to a remarkable set of cultural and natural heritage sites and living heritage elements, which have been inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage and Intangible Cultural Heritage Lists.

World Heritage in the region plays an essential role in the lives of the communities who live in and around these sites, as they constitute a source of pride and knowledge, a powerful driver of local economic development, and a vital resource for reconciliation and sustainable peace. In the same vein, living heritage provides communities with a sense of identity and nourishes cultural diversity and human creativity. Regrettably, this rich and diverse heritage face several challenges, including climate change, natural disasters, conflicts, urban development and tourism pressures.

While celebrating this rich and diverse cultural and natural heritage of Southern Africa, this publication reminds us the importance of this heritage to people's lives and to humanity at large. It also highlights that ensuring its long-term protection and safeguarding is a shared responsibility.



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