

CONSERVATION

2015

and the Environment in Namibia



14
YEARS

GO

GREEN

A Nedbank Namibia Initiative

CONSERVATION

and the Environment in Namibia

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P O Box 21593, Windhoek, Namibia

MANAGING EDITOR Rièth van Schalkwyk
rieth@venture.com.na

PRODUCTION MANAGER Ginger Mauney

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Editor's Note

When the first edition of Conservation & the Environment magazine was launched in 2000, Nedbank signed up as its very first corporate sponsor. Albi Brückner, founder of the Namib Rand Nature Reserve was a board member at the time and the one who convinced the board that this was a project worth supporting. Co-founders of the Go Green Fund, established one year later, Dr Chris Brown, then Director of Environmental Affairs at the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET), and Birgit Hoffmann, Communications and Marketing Executive of Nedbank, recall the story of Go Green and the substantial contribution of the Namibia Nature Foundation to the success of the fund.

Over the years, this magazine has told many of the success stories of projects supported by the Go Green Fund to the Namibian public. The aim of the magazine is to familiarise those members of our society who would not normally even be aware of such projects with the success and challenges of these ventures. This is not the first special edition of the Conservation & the Environment. When Namibia's Community Based Natural Resource Management Programme was expected to win the coveted Tourism of Tomorrow Award, we produced a special edition in 2011 to highlight its success stories. When the Namibia Nature Foundation celebrated 25 years, an entire edition was dedicated to the projects which the Foundation supported through the years. When the MET successfully completed the Strengthening the Protected Areas Network (SPAN) project, Conservation & the Environment was the bearer of good tidings in Shanghai.

Without beautiful images and engaging stories created by passionate people, a magazine like this would not serve any purpose. It would then be just another project report with bare facts and figures. We would have missed the point completely, because the people we produce it for would never actually have read it. Some photographs are perfect while others just capture the perfect moment. Some articles are well written while others just say it as it is. We let their voices be heard, whether the authors are scientists, first-time project leaders or seasoned defenders of their cause.

This special edition is a true reflection of the diversity of environmental issues and the people who dedicate their lives to these concerns.

My special thanks to Ginger Mauney and Katie Oxenham who assisted our team to write, rewrite, edit and proofread this edition to perfection; Julian Fennessy, previous Director of the Namibia Nature Foundation, who trusted us to tell the Go Green story; Jacky Tjivikua who made sure that nothing fell through the cracks; the co-founders of the Go Green Fund for their brilliant idea; and the Nedbank Board for supporting it at a time before it was the trend for corporate companies to do so.

Rièth van Schalkwyk



Research is vital to reach development goals

Message from the Minister of Environment & Tourism

Namibia has been blessed with a wealth of biodiversity assets and is committed to their conservation.

This is demonstrated, for example, by our constitution, our ratification of various international biodiversity agreements, national legislation and the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2013-2022. This commitment has led to some impressive results: our entire 1,500 km coastline is protected within national parks; we have five designated Ramsar Wetland sites of international importance; a 12,000 km² Marine Protected Area; the world's largest Trans-frontier Conservation Area; and, significantly, conservation has become an established land use in Namibia. In addition to our national parks, communal conservancies cover almost 19 percent of the country, while an estimated 15 percent of freehold land is dedicated to wildlife management. Ongoing research indicates that our wildlife populations continue to go from strength to strength.

Our biodiversity is not just important in its own right, but is the basis of livelihood for most of the Namibian population. Maintaining and enhancing the health and viability of biodiversity is crucial for us to achieve our national development objectives of high and sustained economic growth, employment creation and increased income equality. However, given that there are many threats and challenges to achieving these goals, it is vital that they are underpinned by appropriately applied research.

For the past 12 years, the Go Green Fund has made valuable contributions towards such research. It has provided funding for a wide variety of innovative projects. These include many with sustainable development and livelihood enhancement components that have produced practical information to address threats and challenges facing our biodiversity. It has also encouraged Namibia to make the most of its opportunities. This special edition of Conservation and the Environment in Namibia showcases many of the projects successfully implemented through the fund.

Along with the wide variety of successful projects, the longevity of the Go Green Fund is testament to the effective collaboration of the Namibia Nature Foundation and Nedbank in its implementation. This type of institutional collaboration is vitally important to assist in good biodiversity conservation outcomes, and sets a good example for others to follow.

The Ministry of Environment and Tourism has been happy to endorse Go Green Fund projects for the past 12 years, and will continue to do so. We look forward to the continued collaboration of the Namibia Nature Foundation and Nedbank in implementing the fund, and expect they will continue to build upon the achievements highlighted in this special edition.



Hon. Pohamba Shifeta

Minister of Environment & Tourism

Go Green for Namibia's people, endemic species and habitats

Message from NEDBANK

Namibia's exceptional efforts at protecting its natural habitats have received worldwide acclaim and the country has played a gracious host to a number of prestigious global environmental summits over the past few years.

This acclaim has underscored Namibia's reputation as being amongst the leading countries on the continent with regard to wildlife conservation and environmental protection. In fact, our country has made the concept of sustainable development the cornerstone on which to base environmental work. It has endorsed this approach in our National Constitution and committed itself internationally in investing in our future.

At Nedbank Namibia, we appreciate that funding is often very limited and that Government can only do a restricted amount of environmental work. Funding from the private sector is therefore an absolute imperative to sustain the commitments made towards environmental conservation and protection.

By 2001, Nedbank Namibia had come to perceive that environmental conservation was no longer a choice. It is a responsibility – one that we take very seriously. So we founded the Go Green Fund, which supports individuals and organisations that are working actively towards a more sustainable future for Namibia's people, endemic species and habitats. The importance of Nedbank Namibia's unique Go Green Fund is becoming even more pronounced as a contributor to the triple bottom-line effect.

Already considered a pioneering initiative and Namibia's corporate torchbearer for environmental protection, the Go Green Fund has disbursed more than N\$5 million to a host of deserving projects and initiatives.

You can take action too, by helping us support the conservation projects we select for their holistic approach and positive impact. Make Nedbank Namibia your banking partner next time you buy a house or a car, and we will donate to the Go Green Fund on your behalf, at no extra cost.

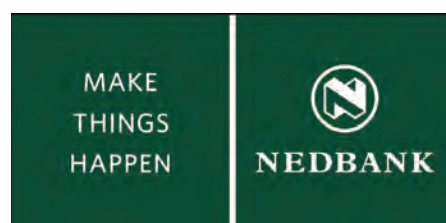
Implemented in partnership with the Namibia Nature Foundation, our Go Green Fund is aimed at supporting individuals and organisations working towards a more sustainable future. It supports the conservation, protection and wise management of Namibian habitats and indigenous plant and animal species. It promotes the sustainable use of natural resources, enhances the understanding of indigenous species and natural ecosystems, and disseminates information on environmental issues and parameters among communities.

Across Namibia, for Namibia, Go Green is in action – all thanks to the loyal support of our valued clients.



**Lionel
Matthews**

Managing Director
NEDBANK



A real partnership that delivers

Message from the Namibia Nature Foundation

This edition of *Conservation and the Environment in Namibia* is testament to the fact that the Go Green Fund has made a big impact on conservation in Namibia.

Nedbank has shown its commitment towards conservation and sustainable development in Namibia not only by securing the funds for Go Green Fund but by teaming up with the Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF) and creating a real partnership that delivers.

This was done at a time when business and NGO partnerships were rare and even today many so-called business and NGO partnerships are simply funding arrangements. Go Green Fund is a real partnership and the NNF is therefore extremely proud to be a partner with Nedbank Namibia in making Go Green Fund the success that it is today. In all of this success that is presented here, there are two aspects that stand out for us at the NNF.

The first is the scope of work and activities that have been covered successfully with the relatively modest sums awarded to each project. Much larger funds have certainly achieved much less. This can be attributed to the strong partnership between the NNF and Nedbank as well as the active involvement and guidance of a strong committee of conservation experts, which have combined to ensure a high success rate.

The second aspect is that the fund covers a wide range of conservation activities and in particular makes available funds for more common species and general activities that many other donors overlook. As with many things in life we often forget that it is important to keep doing the right things. The same applies to conservation. We need to keep common species common and general landscapes functioning. On these two aspects the Go Green Fund stands out above other conservation funds.

As we look forward, we look towards a stronger partnership between Nedbank and the NNF, to continue tackling some of the pressing conservation and sustainable development issues that face Namibia. We hope that the next five years will see greater innovation in what Go Green Fund does and how we do it. We hope to forge closer linkages with other environmental funds, such as the Environmental Investment Fund, to create synergies to benefit conservation and ultimately sustain and improve our lives and those of the generations to come. We also hope to make Go Green Fund a proudly Namibian brand to remind Namibians that we are blessed with an extremely rich natural heritage and to show the world that we are leaders in conservation.



Angus Middleton

Executive Director
Namibia Nature Foundation



Purpose moves people to rehabilitate the world

Birgit Hoffmann and Dr. Chris Brown

Looking back at 14 years of the Go Green success story poses the question: How did it all start?

It has been well documented that, at the time of Namibia's Independence in 1990, the country faced severe environmental constraints and uncertainties. Many of these were inherited from the apartheid era, when there was a lack of environmental citizenship and where most of the population was excluded from participating in environmental stewardship. If not properly addressed, these constraints could have significantly undermined Namibia's endeavours to achieve its national development goals. However, one individual and one organisation can do little about this if working in isolation. An opportunity lay in bringing people together who were passionate about the environment and knew that, as a group, they could make a real impact.

In its Constitution, followed by the Green Plan tabled in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, the Government of Namibia positioned itself among the leaders in Africa advocating sustainable development, the wise management of natural resources and the protection of its biological diversity. The Green Plan was implemented via Namibia's 12 Point Plan for Integrated and Sustainable Environmental Management which comprised the main body of the Minister of Environment & Tourism's budget speech in 1993. All the components of the 12 Point Plan were implemented. Indeed, some are long-term initiatives which are still ongoing, e.g. the community-based natural resource management programme. Many have evolved, grown and adapted to changing national and global conditions and pressures. One of the support mechanisms envisaged for the future expansion of the Green Plan and 12 Point Plan was the establishment of an environmental fund, to help democratize environmental stewardship and to help provide the tools for the concept "think global, act local". A number of environmental funds were established, a micro fund by the Namibia Nature Foundation, a Swedish Small Grants Fund and a Norwegian Small Grants Fund, both run by the Namibia Nature Foundation and, most recently in 2011, the Namibia Environmental Investment Fund. Donor and NGO funds, while important and making a valuable contribution to environmental management, are not, by their nature, long lasting. The role of the private sector and government are both vital in providing long-term grants mechanisms to support the ideas, ingenuity and dynamic energy of citizens to respond to environmental issues and opportunities. It was against this background that Dr Chris Brown, then Head of the Directorate of Environmental Affairs, and Birgit Hoffmann then the Communications & Marketing Executive of Nedbank, started talking about Nedbank taking the corporate lead in setting up an environmental fund in the form of a grants

funding mechanism for good projects. This fund became the well-known and highly respected Nedbank Namibia Go Green Fund.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." This well-known statement by Margaret Mead is a suitable way to summarise what Go Green stands for, what it has meant to Nedbank, and indeed, what Go Green has delivered over the past 14 years for the good of Namibia's environment for all Namibians.

The idea to have an environmental fund complementing the corporate social investment drive by the bank thus started way before the actual launch of the Go Green Fund in October 2001. Research showed that Namibia was ready for an environmental initiative that had a heart, and in which citizens could contribute in their own ways, and witness the difference their contribution makes. In short, empowering people to "think global and act local" and helping people to make a difference.

At the time, various options were explored and stakeholders were consulted on the idea of establishing an environmental initiative for the bank. Nedbank developed the concept of banking products specifically linked to the generation of funds for the environment, and then launched the Go Green Fund.

Today the fund is still based on the same principles as when launched in 2001. On the banking side, four home-loan products and a vehicle-finance product were developed, geared to raise funds for Go Green. A suit of good governance mechanisms were developed for the management and administration of the Go Green Fund, including prioritized environmental criteria, an application process and robust project evaluation procedures. The warm-hearted promotional campaign soon captured the hearts and minds of Namibians. The Go Green Committee, serving in an honorary capacity, was appointed to review funding applications and confirm projects. The first Go Green Committee comprised Albi Brückner as Chairman, Drs Chris Brown and Peter Tarr as environmental experts, and Bertus Matthee and Birgit Hoffmann representing the bank. An independent third party, the Namibia Nature Foundation, was contracted to manage the financial grant-making process for approved projects, to monitor progress and to render suitable assistance to ensure that projects achieved their stated conservation goal.

Good-quality projects that met the priorities stipulated by the fund were forthcoming, and within the first three years, the Go Green Fund supported a range of innovative and successful conservation initiatives. The Go Green

GO GREEN Committee Members

Fund has proven to be not only short-term successful, but in many cases, highly catalytic. Many projects started with Go Green funding and have grown, been successful in sourcing additional funds, and today running stronger than ever. Another important factor of the Go Green funding is that the capacity of Namibians has grown enormously to think through an environmental challenge, turn it into a well-structured project proposal with a budget, and then implement the work, write progress reports and provide financial reports. Thirteen years ago there were just a few larger NGOs with this capacity. Now good project proposals come from remote villages across Namibia.

The public loved the fund and supported it well. The media gave exceptional exposure to the Go Green Fund, and reported extensively on the achievements of the different Go Green projects. Before long the international donor community became interested, and in some cases started to match local input with international donor project funding.

Today, the success of the Nedbank Namibia Go Green Fund, the first bank in the country and one of the first serious long-term private-sector commitments to investing in sustainable development and environmental conservation, has spread far beyond the borders of Namibia and Southern Africa. It has been hailed by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), the Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as a corporate success story without equal.

When reflecting on the achievements of Go Green, it becomes evident that you don't have to wait for established directives and policies to facilitate change. The manner in which the Go Green Fund was conceptualised and implemented is a clear example of how out-of-the-box thinking coupled with a solid foundational concept leads to sustainability, even after the original role players have left. The founding team demonstrated that independent thinking and solid entrepreneurial ideas can lead to transformational achievements that are ahead of their time. In this sense, Go Green serves as a good example of how an initiative by individuals and an enlightened corporate entity, in this case Nedbank Namibia, who are driven by purpose, can make a meaningful contribution to the environment sector and to the wider society.

It is indeed gratifying to see that 14 years down the line, Go Green has gone from strength to strength. May the next 14 years bring further growth, innovation and success to Nedbank Namibia, their Go Green Fund and to the Go Green Committee, to serve Namibia in the interests of conservation and sustainable development.



Dr. Peter Tarr
GGF Chair Person (SAIEA)



Angus Middleton
NNF Executive Director



Dr Chris Brown
Sustainable Solutions Trust



Kenneth /Uiseb
Ministry of Environment
and Tourism



Benedict Libanda
Environmental Investment Fund



Dr. Julian Fennesy
Giraffe Conservation Foundation



Gernot de Klerk
Nedbank Senior Manager
Marketing & Communications



Jacky Tjivikua
Nedbank Manager GGF,
Sponsorship and CSI



Natende Paulo
NNF GGF Accountant



Katie Oxenham
NNF GGF Project Coordinator

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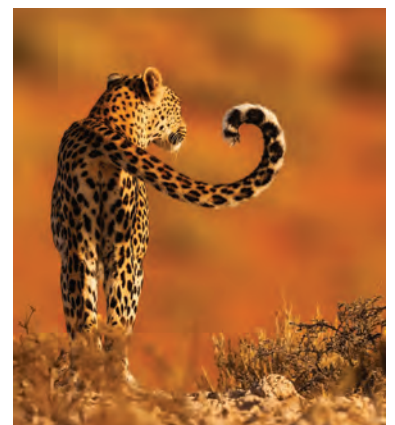
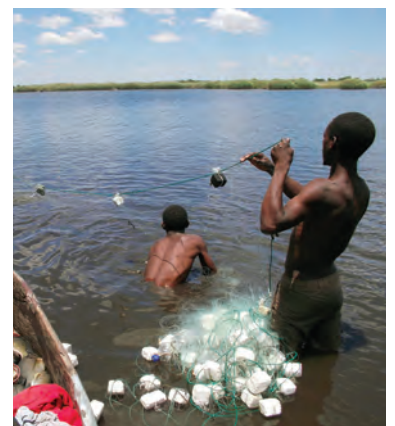
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Making an uneasy co-existence easier - leopards and farmers

Auas Oanob Conservancy and the Leibniz Institute for Zoo and Wildlife Research (IZW)

Vera Menges & Joerg Melzheimer

Namibians are known for their love of beef and their commitment to conservation. These two passions are not mutually exclusive. The co-existence of predators and livestock on farmlands is practiced throughout our country. However, when predators deplete livestock numbers, there is conflict and the best way of dealing with it is by making informed choices.

What makes the study of leopards south of Windhoek in the Auas Oanob Conservancy so interesting, is that farmers are taking the lead. They initiated the study and are collaborating with researchers and the Ministry of Environment and Tourism in their quest to gain scientific information on leopards sharing Namibian farmland. This information will be key to improving farm and herd management and ultimately reducing human-wildlife conflict.

By fitting GPS collars to a number of leopards and analysing leopard movements over time, the project's research activities and their management implications include the following:

Home range size

Studying home range size will provide a sound understanding of the average area single leopards cover and, on average, how long an individual leopard stays in a particular area. This information will help farmers in understanding how leopards move through their land and if problems with stock raiding are to occur, they will be better able to identify the exact problem animal.

Farmers can adopt their management strategies according to the findings and preferably use or avoid certain areas for grazing herds with younger calves.

OPPOSITE Leopards can adapt to various environments and have a vast range of prey species. This makes them one of the most widespread big cats in the world, but since suitable habitats often underlie anthropogenic use, the potential for human-wildlife conflict increases.

Photo by Bernd Wasiolka

About the Team

Joerg Melzheimer

Spatial ecologist:
Initiator of the project, project leader, immobilising of animals, communication with stakeholders.

Vera Menges

PhD student:
Handling of animals, analysis of spatial data gained through collars, collection and analysis of data regarding feeding behaviour via GPS data, communication with stakeholders (contact person regarding progress of the project and updates on data, talks at conservancy meetings).

Dirk Bockmühl

Technical assistant:
trapping of leopards.

Ruben Portas

Research assistant: involved in trapping of the leopards, assistance during the immobilizations and aerial tracking of collared animals.

Dr Bettina Wachter

Senior researcher:
senior scientific adviser to the project.

Dr Bernd Wasiolka

Animal ecologist:
aerial tracking.

Dr Miha Krofel

Senior researcher:
senior scientific adviser to the project



ABOVE Although the farmers of the Auas Oanob Conservancy repeatedly experience losses due to leopards, they promote the co-existence with these iconic big cats and therefore initiated and support the Leopard Research Project.

BELOW Giving feedback to stakeholders about the proceedings and results of the research is an essential part of the Leopard Research Project. Here Vera Menges is giving an update on the scientific findings of the Project.



Habitat preference

This part of the study will provide information on whether or not leopards prefer certain habitat types, how habitat is structured and how much time a leopard is spending in a particular habitat type.

If leopards spend significantly more time in certain habitat types, farmers will not use this habitat type for grazing of cattle herds with younger calves.

Feeding habits

Feeding habits and prey preferences are another critical factor in understanding the farmer-leopard conflict. The key question is: are leopards opportunistic hunters which randomly take livestock, or have certain individuals learned to specialise in hunting livestock?

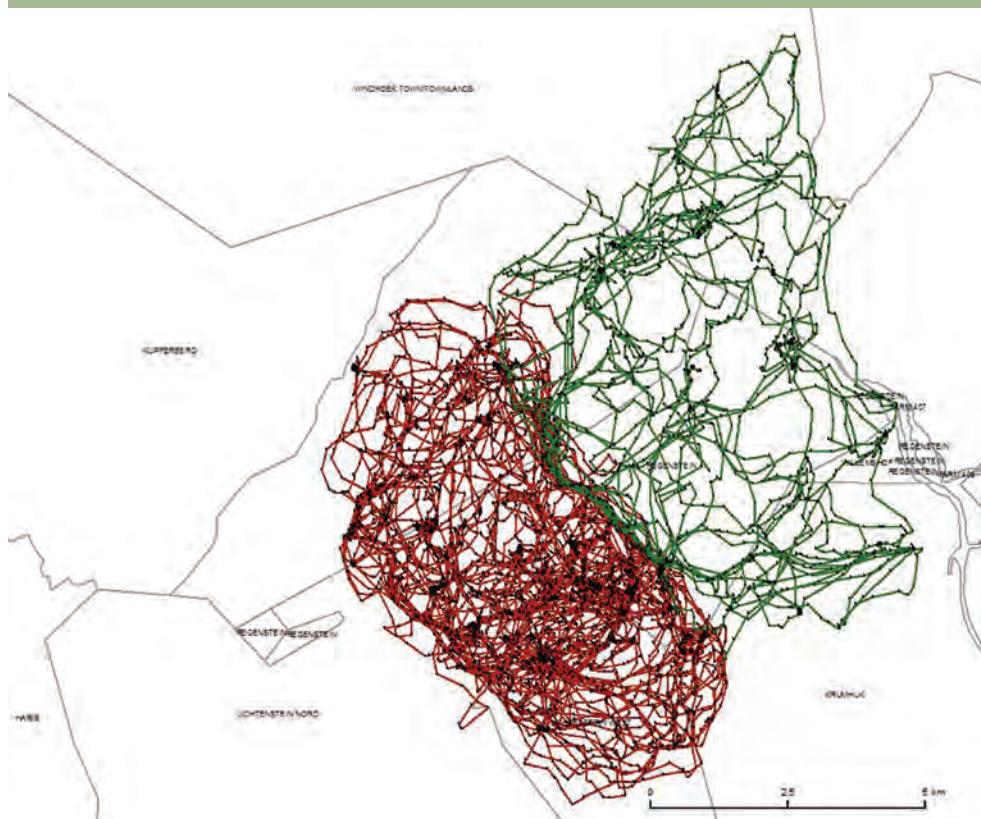
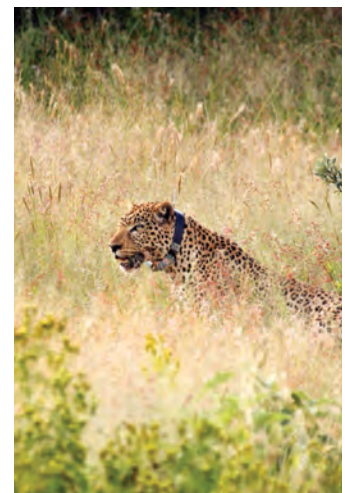
If it turns out that certain leopards do specialise in hunting livestock, we could specifically target these problem animals to relocate them. They could be part of a well-organised trophy hunt that would generate some revenue for various stakeholders.

“Co-existence between humans and wildlife is not a romantic and “green” notion; it is critical to our country’s economy. The tourism industry is vital to our country and Namibia’s wildlife. Big cats, like leopards, are one of our greatest attractions”, says Jörg Melzheimer

Improving farm management, reducing losses and thereby promoting the coexistence of leopards on commercial farmland will be beneficial to the entire country. In Namibia, the livelihood of many people depends on livestock farming. We need to reduce financial losses through better management of our livestock herds. Only then can co-existence of leopards and humans be ensured.

Fast Facts

- Scientific name: *Panthera pardus*
- Solitary, elusive carnivore
- Mainly nocturnal
- Very good climber and swimmer
- Often hides prey in trees to avoid scavengers (usually in areas with lions and/or spotted hyenas). In areas without lions and/or spotted hyenas, prey is mostly dragged under or into bushes
- Hunting strategy: stalker/pouncer
- Vast range of prey
- Smallest prey found: dung beetle
- Largest found: giant eland
- Average prey size: 23 kg
- Marking with scent/faeces/scratching
- Territorial (both sexes)
- Reproductive behaviour: associates for mating for the duration of a few days
- Reproductive age: >2 years
- No particular breeding season
- Female without cubs goes into estrus approximately every 46 days
- Gestation period: 90-105 days
- 1-3 cubs (3 cubs are very rare)
- At about six weeks the cubs may be left alone for up to 36 hours while the mother is hunting
 - duration approximately 7 days
 - cubs leave hide/den
 - are able to climb trees
 - start eating meat (but still nurse)
- Offspring is independent at approximately 22 months



THIS PAGE When a leopard is caught, Jörg Melzheimer immobilizes it and Vera Menges fits a GPS-collar. The procedure is done in situ and takes less than one hour. Then the animal is given the antidote. Collars will take positions of the leopard's location every 15 minutes for approx. 1.5 years and therefore allow valuable insight into movements and habitat use (see map on the left).