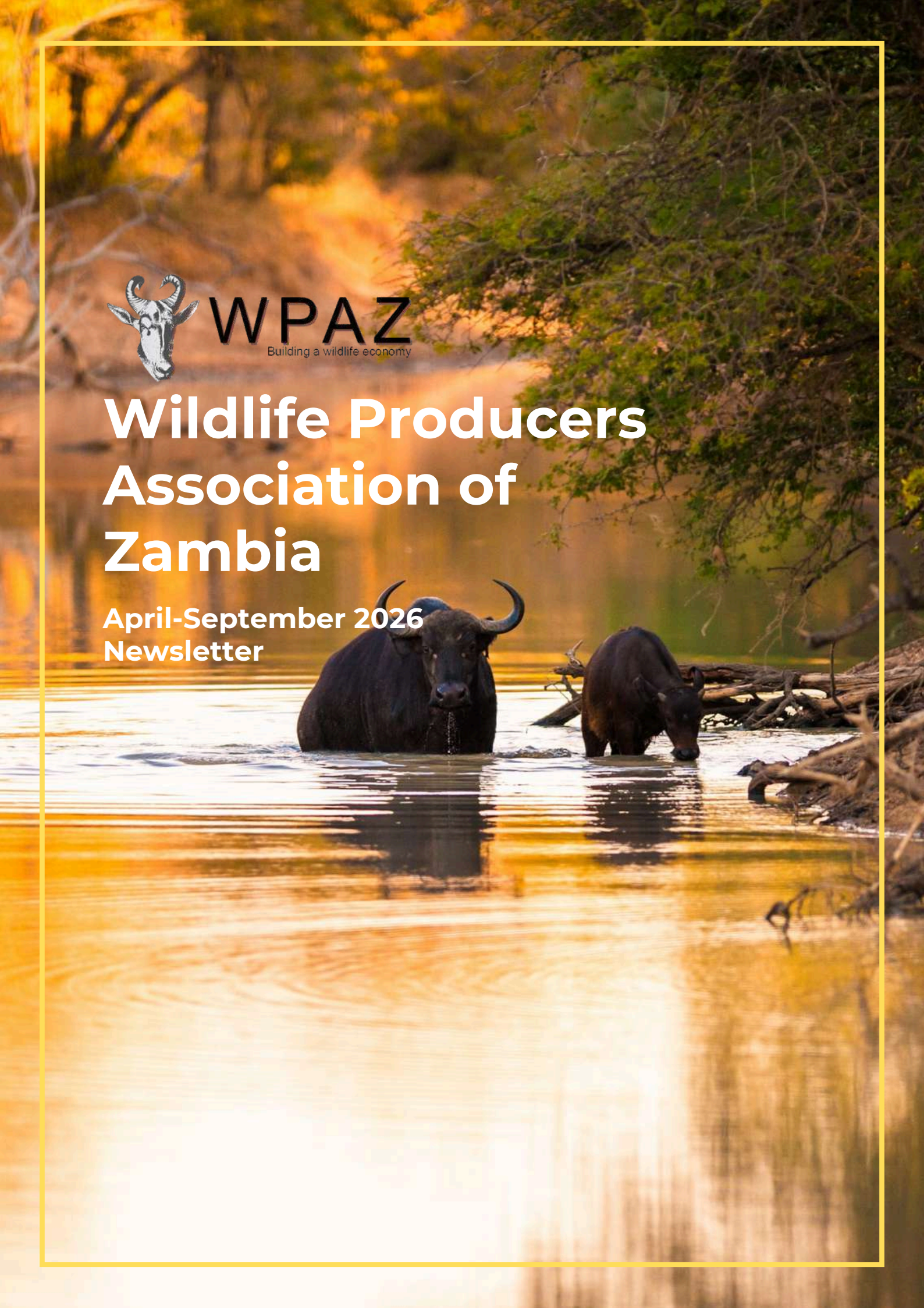

WPAZ
Building a wildlife economy

Wildlife Producers Association of Zambia

April-September 2026 Newsletter

Highlights

DNPW leads the development of community game ranch toolkit

WPAZ contributes to the development of the Community Game Ranching Toolkit with DNPW and partners.

Celebrating Community Wildlife Monitors

WPAZ celebrates the first-ever graduation of community wildlife monitors.

Promoting Legal Game Meat

WPAZ raises awareness of legal game meat at the Solwezi and Mkushi Expos

Learning Through Exposure VisitsWPAZ facilitates partnerships between private and community game ranches

Building Fundraising Capacity

WPAZ is strengthening its resource mobilisation through the EMERGE Programme.

The Quarter in Review

Foreword

As we close the second and third quarters of 2026, we thank all members for their continued commitment to the Wildlife Producers Association of Zambia (WPAZ). We remain focused on strengthening our role as the primary representative body for legal wildlife producers across Zambia.

WPAZ continued implementing its Oak Foundation-funded programme through Wildlife Crime Prevention (WCP), alongside the Sustainable Wildlife Management Programme supported by CIFOR-ICRAF, now the Landscape Alliance.

The third quarter presented challenges arising from international economic uncertainty, donor funding changes and national elections, affecting some fieldwork. Nevertheless, the Secretariat continued delivering essential project activities while improving internal operations and donor reporting systems.

Richard Jeffery, Executive Director

Key priorities include policy advocacy, engagement with the Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW), private wildlife estate security, and developing a Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen Government and private sector collaboration.

WPAZ continues working with Government institutions, traditional leaders and conservation partners to advance community game ranching. Key initiatives include the Community Game Ranch Toolkit, wildlife economy scoping study, Game Ranching Database updates, Wildlife Monitors' training, exposure visits and exploration of carbon trading opportunities.

As we enter the final quarter, priorities include advancing Year Two of the Oak Foundation/WCP programme, finalising the Mize Community Wildlife Estate Wildlife Management Production Model and Business Plan, and launching the Community Game Ranch Toolkit with DNPW under the Landscape Alliance project extension to March 2027.

Our newsletter provides more detailed coverage of our activities below. We look forward to your continued membership support, stay safe, and feel free to contact us with any queries, comments or suggestions as we plan for a busy 2027.

Membership Status

As of 30 September 2026, WPAZ had 91 registered members, of whom 58 were paid-up members, representing 63.7% of the total membership. The remaining 33 members (36.3%) had outstanding membership fees. We sincerely thank all members who have paid their subscriptions for their continued support and commitment to the Association. We encourage members with outstanding fees to regularise their membership and join fellow members in supporting WPAZ's efforts to strengthen Zambia's wildlife sector.

Membership Services and Visitations

WPAZ continued to strengthen its engagement with members through membership services and field visitations. These engagements provided an opportunity for the Secretariat to interact directly with members, better understand their priorities, challenges and needs, and identify areas where WPAZ can provide support and representation. During the reporting period, WPAZ visited members in Mumbwa, Kabwe, Mukushi, Solwezi, Mwinilunga and Chisamba. These visits and their supporting engagements enabled the Secretariat to work with members on issues affecting their wildlife enterprises and to better understand the practical challenges they face in managing their operations.

WPAZ also continued providing membership services to support members in meeting their regulatory and administrative requirements. These services included assistance with annual returns, outfitter's licences and other relevant permits and licences, as well as following up on issues raised by members with relevant authorities. Through these services, WPAZ continues to support members in maintaining compliance with government regulations while also ensuring that members' concerns and needs are represented and followed up at the appropriate level.

To further add value to membership, WPAZ is planning to expand its technical advisory services for private wildlife estates (PWEs) and community game ranches (CGRs). The Secretariat is also establishing an updated database of potential partners, donors, and fundraisers including Safari Club International (SCI) and Nature Capital to broaden the Association's network and financial sustainability. A growing membership base, which now includes community and open game ranches, is being leveraged to benefit conservation NGOs and donors through coordinated advocacy and technical support. These agenda will all benefit greatly from strategic support from our members and partners.

Policy and Advocacy

WPAZ continued to strengthen its policy and advocacy work by engaging government, Parliament, private sector organisations (such as ZNFU, TCZ, ZTA and PPFD) and other stakeholders on issues affecting wildlife producers and the development of Zambia's wildlife economy. The Association used these platforms to represent members' interests, provide technical input into policy processes and advocate for a more supportive regulatory and operating environment for private and community wildlife enterprises. In order to strengthen our role supporting Government and private wildlife sector collaboration we are working to establish a DNPW/WPAZ Memorandum of Understanding with DNPW during October, 2026. Through these engagements, WPAZ continued to strengthen collaboration between communities, government and the private sector and advocate for an enabling environment for community game ranching in Zambia. Key engagements during the reporting period included:

Engagement with Government on Wildlife Regulations, and Parliamentary Representation: WPAZ continued discussions with the Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW) on regulatory and policy issues affecting the sector. This included engagement on the development of guidelines and a Policy Framework for open and community game ranches, as well as broader discussions on improving the regulatory framework for wildlife producers. The Secretariat has been advancing key national policy instruments to establish a formal regulatory framework for wildlife estates. WPAZ also continued to engage the government on the review and amendment of the Wildlife Act, additionally making formal presentation to Parliament regarding amendments to Wildlife Act No. 14 of 2015. WPAZ participated in the DNPW Rhino Strategy review and General Management Plans (GMPs) launch for seven National Parks and GMAs.

Tourism Council and Zambia Tourism Agency Collaboration: WPAZ maintains active participation in the Tourism Council of Zambia (TCZ) and the Zambia Tourism Agency (ZTA) through numerous platforms, including PPFD and via the Development Sector Skills Body Advisory Group (SSBAG) for Travel, Hospitality and Tourism (WPAZ contributed to the final validation of the Tourism Sector Skills Strategy).

Farm Security and Wildlife Crime: WPAZ continued to raise security concerns affecting members through the ZNFU Farm Security platform, including poaching, cattle rustling and other threats to wildlife and farm operations. WPAZ had also already worked with Wildlife Crime Prevention to convene a stakeholder meeting on farm security in Mazabuka, bringing together government institutions, law enforcement, commercial farmers and WPAZ members. WPAZ subsequently developed and submitted a Farm Security Position Paper to ZNFU to further strengthen advocacy on these issues.

Private Sector Engagement: WPAZ participated in the 4th Private Sector Day, using the platform to highlight the contribution of wildlife ranching and tourism to job creation, rural development and national economic growth. The engagement also provided an opportunity to build relationships with other private sector organisations and explore areas for collaboration.

Overall, WPAZ's policy and advocacy work during the reporting period focused on strengthening the regulatory environment, addressing security and human-wildlife conflict, supporting community and private wildlife enterprises, and ensuring that the interests of wildlife producers are represented in national policy discussions.

Capacity Building and Community Game Ranching

WPAZ continued to promote community game ranching as an important pathway for strengthening community participation in Zambia's wildlife economy. The focus was on building the capacity of communities, generating practical evidence on opportunities and challenges, and working with government and other partners to create an enabling environment for communities to establish and manage viable wildlife enterprises.

Chitibwa Iyendwe Community Explores Game Ranching Opportunities in Mazabuka

In May 2026, WPAZ, in collaboration with the Frankfurt Zoological Society (FZS) and Wildlife Crime Prevention (WCP), facilitated an exposure visit for representatives of the Chitibwa Iyendwe Conservation Project to game ranches in Mazabuka. The visit provided community representatives with practical insights into game ranching operations, management practices and potential business opportunities, strengthening their understanding of community-based wildlife enterprises.

Demonstration of disease control measures at Kushiya farms during the exposure visit for the community leaders from Chitibwa

Focus group discussion with stakeholders at Nsangi Community game ranch during the baseline survey

WPAZ Lays the Groundwork for Stronger Community Game Ranches

In May 2026, the Wildlife Producers Association of Zambia (WPAZ) conducted baseline assessments in Nsangi and Chibwika Chiefdoms in Mwinilunga District to better understand community priorities and identify opportunities to strengthen community game ranching.

Through participatory consultations with community representatives and stakeholders, WPAZ identified key areas for capacity building, including governance, wildlife management, livestock husbandry, beekeeping, animal health and entrepreneurship. These findings will help inform targeted interventions that respond to community needs and promote sustainable wildlife-based livelihoods.

Recognising the importance of collaboration, WPAZ also engaged the West Lunga Conservation Project (WLCP), a key partner with longstanding experience in wildlife conservation and community development. The engagement focused on coordinating planned activities with ongoing initiatives supporting the Nsangi and Chibwika communities, helping ensure that interventions complement existing efforts.

The assessments mark an important step towards developing locally informed support that strengthens community capacity, promotes sustainable wildlife management and creates opportunities for rural economic development. Through this work, WPAZ continues to champion community participation in Zambia's wildlife economy.

The First-Ever Community Wildlife Monitors Graduation Ceremony

On 1 August 2026, WPAZ celebrated a landmark achievement with the first-ever graduation ceremony of 12 Community Wildlife Monitors for the Chibwika and Nsangi Community Game Ranches. The half-day ceremony took place at Corrie Enterprises in Mumbwa District and was jointly organised by Corrie Enterprises, the West Lunga Conservation Project (WLCP), and WPAZ. The event was attended by community leaders, the area ZNS Colonel for Mumbwa, neighbouring wildlife conservation organisations, DNPW, and the Secretariat.

The Guest of Honour was represented by Mr Mastano Ngandu, the Principal Warden CBNRM for DNPW. The programme included welcome remarks by the WPAZ Executive Director, a training overview by Corrie Enterprises, community remarks, a keynote address by the Guest of Honour, field demonstrations by the graduating wildlife monitors, certificate presentations, patrol gear handover, and an official group photograph. The event was deliberately capped at approximately 26–30 participants to ensure a focused, manageable, and cost-effective gathering.

This inaugural graduation sets a national benchmark and serves as a proof-of-concept mechanism for public, private and community partnerships collaborating with DNPW on the security of our wildlife resources, which in turn we expect to inspire other communities across Zambia to embrace wildlife and natural resource conservation as a pathway to sustainable

DNPW Leads Development of Community Game Ranching Toolkit

WPAZ is contributing its expertise in wildlife production and enterprise development to strengthen community game ranching in Zambia. Working alongside DNPW, Landscape Alliance and WCP, WPAZ is supporting the development of a practical toolkit to guide communities in establishing and sustainably managing wildlife enterprises.

On 24–25 September 2026, WPAZ participated in a DNPW-convened Technical Working Group workshop to review and strengthen the draft practical toolkit and guidelines for establishing community game ranches in Zambia . The initiative, supported by the EU-funded Sustainable Wildlife Management Programme, will provide guidance on governance, wildlife management, regulatory compliance and business planning.

The toolkit will provide practical guidance on governance, land-use planning, wildlife management, registration, regulatory compliance and business planning. It aims to equip communities and traditional leaders with the knowledge needed to establish and manage viable wildlife enterprises that contribute to biodiversity conservation and sustainable rural livelihoods.

Through this partnership, WPAZ is contributing its industry experience in wildlife production and enterprise development, helping bridge the gap between policy, practical implementation and business viability. The Association's involvement reflects its commitment to strengthening community participation in the wildlife economy and fostering collaboration between Government, private wildlife producers and local communities.

Once finalised, the toolkit will serve as an important resource for advancing community-led wildlife management and sustainable wildlife-based enterprises across Zambia.

Communications and Visibility

WPAZ participated in the Solwezi and Mkushi Expos, using the platforms to raise awareness of legal game meat and the economic opportunities offered by sustainable wildlife utilisation. Through live game meat braais at the stands, visitors had the opportunity to learn about legal game meat, its availability on the market and the importance of supporting legitimate wildlife value chains.

At the Solwezi Expo, WPAZ collaborated with its member, Mavi Bix, a retailer of legal game meat, to promote awareness of where consumers can purchase legally sourced products. Mavi Bix also showcased forest foods, including mopane worms, which are largely sourced from local communities, highlighting the livelihood opportunities associated with natural resource-based enterprises.

WPAZ also highlighted the role of community game ranches in supplying legal game meat to the market while creating income-generating opportunities for local communities. Through these engagements, the Association continues to promote wildlife as a valuable economic resource that can support both biodiversity conservation and rural livelihoods.

In May 2026, Choolwe Luwamya and Tracy Mukuma represented WPAZ at the first in-person workshop of the EMERGE Programme in Cape Town, South Africa. Supported by the Oak Foundation and facilitated by the Resource Alliance, the programme focuses on strengthening fundraising, leadership and organisational development.

Participation reinforced the importance of building WPAZ's internal fundraising capacity to support its long-term sustainability and programme delivery.

As a next step, WPAZ aims to develop a resource mobilisation strategy and funding pipeline, building on the skills of its existing team and engaging specialist support where necessary. These efforts will help the Association diversify its funding opportunities and sustain its work in advancing Zambia's wildlife economy.

WPAZ team with other participants during the physical gathering at the EMERGE programme

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