

## CHILDREN IN THE WILDERNESS BOTSWANA

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS



In October 2016, Kim Nixon was appointed as Wilderness Safaris Managing Director (MD) to oversee the company's operations in Botswana. Kim has in excess two decades' experience and knowledge of the ecotourism industry, including guiding, sales and many years spent working in lodge and mobile safari operations.

Kim began his career in the 1990s as a professional guide in Botswana, managing mobile safaris through the national parks, game reserves and certain private concessions in the country. He joined Wilderness Safaris in 2004 as General Manager of the then newly-branded mobile safaris division, Wilderness Explorations. After some years spearheading the redevelopment and resurgent growth in interest in the product, Kim shifted to managing the sales team and pivotal trade relationships for the North American market.

After moving to Singapore in 2015 to focus on the development of the Asian market for renowned tour operator Asia to Africa, Kim decided to return to Botswana to rejoin the Wilderness family. With over 10 years of experience with Wilderness Safaris, he brings with him a great understanding of the company's product and guest expectations, as well as the Group's core sustainability ethos and vision to build further conservation economies in Africa.

His deep knowledge of Botswana and passion for its wilderness areas and people will be a great asset as he takes on his new role as MD. He joins a dedicated, skilled and knowledgeable team to continue driving a culture of service excellence across the company's 25 camps in the region. He will also oversee the operations for Wilderness Air Botswana and Northern Air Maintenance.

Kim has a National Diploma and BTech degree in Nature Conservation. In his words, he has a life-long passion for Africa, conservation, the continent's people and responsible tourism. He is committed to developing and maintaining relationships with Government, as well as being directly involved with local communities and other tourism-related operations that will continue to entrench Botswana as a world-leading African tourism destination.



**Ben Anthony Zuze** is an Environmental Education Manager at Mokolodi Nature, responsible for the Environmental Education Programme. Prior to managing the Environmental Education Programme, Ben was a full-time teacher at Shashe Primary School in Maun. During his fourteen years teaching experience, he played a pivotal role in ensuring the establishment of regional Environmental Education structures; Development and Implementation of School Environmental Policies.

He has been a regional Chairperson of the Association of Environmental Clubs of Botswana (AECB) for ten years, and the National Chairperson of the same association for six years. During this period, he worked closely with the CITW Environmental Education Programme. He has a Bachelor Degree in Education, with a major in Environmental Education and Social Studies from the University of Botswana. He sits as a board member in the following committees: The National Environmental Education Committee (NEEC) and the National Environmental Education for Sustainable Development Committee. He is also a member of Environmental Education Association of Southern Africa (EEASA).



**Lesego 'Lesh' Moiteela** has worked for Wilderness Safaris Botswana for the last 13 years, several of which were spent in the Explorations team and working in the Series business as Lodge and Operations Manager. In 2011, he joined Wilderness Safaris' mainstream lodge business as an Operations Manager, holding this role for the last six years until his latest promotion to Cultural Ambassador and Community Relationship Manager, effective 1 February 2017.

Lesh comes with a rich history of experience in Hotel and Restaurant management, including working in guest relations for one of the world's best entertainment destinations, Walt Disney World in Florida. He has always had a passion for people and in this, represents Botswana camps and lodges with pride in HATAB (Hospitality and Tourism Association of Botswana), and works with BTO (Botswana Tourism Organisation) and various other government departments and NGOs.

Lesh was born in the small town of Serowe, Botswana, and comes from a family of five children. He left school at an early age to hit the big city and started working in the hotel industry, gaining much experience from the bottom up. In 1999, he completed a course in Hotel and Restaurant Management and acquired a Diploma in Lodge Management in 2001 and 2004 respectively. In 2014, Lesh successfully completed a Management Development Course (MDP) through the University of Stellenbosch Business School.

After joining Wilderness Safaris as a trainee manager in 2004, Lesh was soon promoted to a Camp Manager where he was also greatly involved in the construction of numerous camps. He was promoted to Field Manager in 2007 and again to Assistant Operations Manager of the Series business in 2010. In 2011, he became the Operations Manager for the Linyanti Concession heading up three camps (Kings Pool, DumaTau and Savuti). During this same year he also achieved a qualification as a Professional Guide with the Botswana Wildlife Training Institute.

Over the last three years, Lesh has been overseeing the operations for six lodges – Abu, Seba, DumaTau, Savuti, Kings Pool and Linyanti Tented Camp. He was responsible for all operations in the Abu Concession, playing an instrumental role in the Elephant Experience and welfare of the Abu herd whilst learning a great deal about the ambassadorial importance these great animals play with regards to elephant conservation.

As an energetic and fun-loving person, Lesh has an excellent, warm and friendly way with people which makes him the ideal candidate to drive the new role of Cultural Ambassador and Community Relationship Manager for Wilderness Safaris Botswana forwards. In addition to driving the company's Media/PR relations within Botswana, Lesh will be working closely with various internal and external communities and stakeholders to ensure that all relationships are being nurtured and grown; closely aligned to Wilderness Safaris core 4Cs sustainability ethos (Commerce, Community, Culture and Conservation).



**Ruth Stewart** has been working with civil society organizations in Botswana for the past 16 years. In 1999, she established a company called *Initiatives Organizational and Skills Development* as a means to provide organizational support in strategic direction, resource mobilization, leadership and programme development. She understands the challenges faced by grass-root organizations and she is passionate about developing sustainable financial alternatives that allow them to remain active and engaged. Ruth has played a fundamental role in the formation of NCONGO - Ngamiland Council of

Non-Governmental Organizations – which was created in 2004 to represent and support all organizations based in the Ngamiland and Okavango sub-districts of Botswana. Ruth has worked alongside many civil society organizations in the country where she has both delivered and gained a wealth of experience. She is looking forward to using her experience and knowledge to support Children in the Wilderness to grow and prosper.



**Dr Sue Snyman** joined Wilderness Safaris in 2008 bringing with her over a decade of experience in the ecotourism industry in southern Africa, including guiding, community development and liaison, camp management and environmental impact assessments as an independent consultant. Sue is the Regional Community Development and Culture Co-ordinator for Wilderness Safaris, as well as the Regional Director of Children in the Wilderness. Other positions include Vice-Chair of the IUCN WCPA Tourism and Protected

Areas Specialist Groups (TAPASG), Research Fellow at the Environmental Economics Policy Research Unit at the University of Cape Town and member of the UNISA Tourism Advisory Committee.

Sue recently received a PhD (Resource Economics) at the University of Cape Town. Having completed coursework at the University of Goteborg in Sweden, the focus of her PhD research was on the socio-economic impact of high-end ecotourism in remote, rural communities adjacent to protected areas, based on over 1800 community surveys in six southern African countries including Botswana, Malawi, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe.



**Mrs. Thea Khama**, wife of the Hon. Minister of Environment, Wildlife and Tourism, Tshekedi Khama, has worked in Botswana for over 2 decades in the health and wellness industry. Thea was born in California, USA and has lived in East, West and Southern Africa most of her life.

Thea practiced as a Certified Massage Therapist in her own practice for 17 years and has worked 20 years as a business owner and the Managing Director of Body n Soul (Pty) Ltd trading as Energym Health Studio -a gym with a difference.

In this role, Thea became interested in mind, body, soul and team development and began designing and facilitating team building events for local banks and corporates as well as personal growth workshops for adults interested in furthering their dreams out of her own initiative.

An avid road cyclist, and recognized as the fastest female in Botswana 2003-2006, Thea created Tsela Riders Road Cycling Network and was the acting chair for three consecutive years and again for another year after taking time off.

Mrs Khama is the author, founder and conceptualizer of Teen Spirit Youth Empowerment camps in Botswana which are a blend of her experience in the creative arts, healing, sports, youth and culture as well as passion for the environment. The aim of these 4-day empowerment camps is for the youth (15-20 yrs) to gain insight into who they are and what possibilities they can create for themselves and become creators of their destinies above life circumstances.

Thea is a professional Consciousness Coach through the Consciousness Coaching Academy SA and is a member of the ICF (International Coaching Federation). She is looking forward to training and coaching more individuals and groups in the future.

Thea: "I fully support the initiatives, programs and ethos of Children in the Wilderness and am committed to having a hand in inspiring and empowering people of all ages to partner with one another and our spectacular planet. I am very impressed with the scope and potential of Children in the Wilderness."



**Tiego MPHO** graduated from a UNESCO-IHE administered regional MSc programme in Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) hosted by University of Zimbabwe. Community outreach and development work in his native Okavango River Basin combined with research experience, under the auspices of International Water Management Institute (South Africa) and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), in both the Volta and Limpopo River Basins have cemented his understanding of the centrality of water to poverty alleviation and environmental sustainability in the developing world.

His professional training in diverse fields such as Environmental Communication, Environmental Management Systems (ISO 14001), Environmental Flow Requirements, Conflict Resolution, Proposal Writing and Development, Project and Programme Management, to name a few, have honed his versatility and ably ushered him into a multi-cultural and diversified world of work. Tiego has previously worked as a senior secondary school sciences teacher; for Kalahari Conservation Society as Community Outreach Officer; for the World Conservation Union (IUCN) as Programme Officer, for USAID's Integrated River Basin Management project as Communication Specialist Consultant as well as for UNDP Botswana as Component Manager for Environmental Governance. Tiego is also Founder and Development Officer of Tlhare Segolo Foundation, an Ngamiland based Community Development Trust. He is married to Dineo and together they are proud parents to Thari-Raphael.