

Chobe Game Lodge launches first eco-friendly safaris

Chobe Game Lodge



On Friday 7th November 2014 the Chobe District Commissioner (DC) Dr Temba Mmusi officially launched the Chobe Game Lodge eco-friendly safaris. A CO2 emission free electric game viewing fleet consisting of a 4WD game-drive vehicle and safari boat – the first safari lodge in Africa to do so.

The launch, which took place on the banks of the Chobe River at Chobe Game Lodge, marked the dawn of a new era for ecotourism in Botswana and Africa. Over 150 people gathered to witness the occasion as the first electric game-drive vehicle and electric safari boat moved silently towards the crowd driven by guides Connie Yazema Mbaeva and Lebo Kgoleng – part of the 14 strong all-female guiding team.

Eight years ago the management team at Chobe Game Lodge embarked on a journey to be the first lodge in Africa to operate an entirely electric safari fleet. Freedom Won SA were approached and soon work began on *Freedom3* (a converted Land Rover and the first silent electric game-drive vehicle in Botswana) and *Freedom4* (a new brand new silent electric safari skimmer boat).

The electricity that charges the long-life lithium batteries to power the fleet comes from the hydro-electric scheme at Victoria Falls and is thus fully-renewable energy. So not only are they CO2 emission free but the experience of a silent safari on *Freedom3* & *Freedom4* is far superior. The wildlife is more confiding without the rumbling diesel motor and guests were astounded by how nice it was to hear only a gentle breeze and the sound of the African bush while moving through the Chobe National Park.

Mr. Seroke T Seleke, Kasane's Principal Airport Operations Officer, was also presented with the sign for what will be the first Electric Vehicle only parking bay in Africa.

CEO of Chobe Holdings Ltd. Mr. Jonathan Gibson called on the industry to consider converting to electric power. The long-term vision is that not only more electric vehicles will be in operation by other safari operators in Botswana, but that it will become the only allowable form of propulsion allowed on the Chobe River.

Speaking at the event, Botswana Tourism Organisation (BTO) board member Ms Thilo Naicker discussed the internationally certified Ecotourism Accreditation Scheme which evaluates and awards the sustainable and responsible initiatives taking place within the industry. Chobe Game Lodge was one of the first properties in the country to receive full ecotourism certification. BTO pledged their support and together with the industry Botswana continues to establish itself as a leading ecotourism destination in the world.

Join Chobe Game Lodge as one of the first operators to offer travellers the chance to explore Botswana in silence, enabling a greater connection with the incredible natural surroundings of an African safari.

For more information about the eco-friendly safaris contact enquiries@chobegamelodge.co.bw or for more information regarding the technology visit our blog section on www.chobegamelodge.com



Crowds gather to witness the launch of the first electric game-drive boat and vehicle in Botswana



Traditional performers shepherd the first electric game-drive vehicle to the start of the launch



The first electric-boat on the Chobe River glides silently through the water



The electric boat and vehicle meet for the launch



The First Electric Vehicle parking bay at any airport in Africa!



The lithium battery powered engine



Checking out the lithium battery bank before the first electric safari voyage on the Chobe River



Plugging in the vehicle for the launch

