

8.10.2019 Wenela, Border crossing to Zambia

At 8:00 am we arrive at the border between Namibia and Zambia. It is a relief to know what to expect as we crossed this border already last year. However, African border crossings are always an adventure. On the Namibian side is not a lot of traffic and all is well in order, we finalize all paperwork very quickly.



Approaching the Zambian border control, the situation is changing. Hordes of money changers are surrounding us waving piles of cash. A very long row of trucks is queuing up and blocking the road to the Zambian border. We have to drive zick-zack through the trucks to get to the border control building. Ok, let the border-crossing-journey begin. We have learnt from last year to first exchange Zambian Kwacha (ZKW) at the official bank counter before we

approach the first counter. The Immigration Lady asks us to do the health check first. However, the Health Check Lady apologizes that due to a power cut the screening camera does not work and sends us back to the Immigration Lady. All the counters are in the same room and as we return to the Immigration Lady, we explain to her that no health check is possible due to the power cut. She just answers "Yes, I know". Well, it seems we still had to follow the protocol... Next stops to pay for are Carbon Tax, Insurance, Road Tax and Council Fee. At the barrier everything is checked one more time and we have to put our details down again in a thick book. Finally, after 90 minutes we are on the Zambian side.

The first town on the Zambian side is Sesheke, the hottest town in Zambia we read. One notices immediately how few cars are driving on the road, most people walk or have a bicycle.



Now the next challenge is awaiting us, the infamous road M10 from Sesheke to Livingstone. We have heard a lot about this road and our travel book says “pothole highway with some remaining shreds of tar”. The floods after the raining season and the heavy trucks carrying copper have destroyed the road which was built not long ago by a South African company. However, looking at how the road was built (the thickness of the tar and the flimsy foundation work) one could assume some of the road construction financing may have ended up in the wrong hands as well.

Soon one pothole follows the next, they come in all variations, combinations, sizes and depths. There are so many potholes, it is impossible to avoid them all. For a large part we actually drive beside the road as this by-pass piste is slightly better. We need five hours for 150km which is very normal as we were told.



As we reach the Kubu Zambezi Campsite, approximately 20km before Livingstone we call it a day and stop for the night. We have had enough bumping around for today.

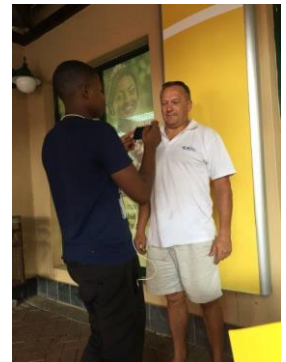


9.10.2019 Livingstone

We are looking forward to explore Livingstone. It's one of the more known towns of Zambia, as it shares the Victorian Falls with Zimbabwe. As Zimbabwe has returned to a state of decline all daily necessities, from food to diesel and more, are in short supply. Therefore, we wonder if Zambia would be able to profit from this situation and gain some more tourists. We are the best example, due to the current situation in Zimbabwe we decided to travel to Zambia instead...



In town, we first we have to run some errands change money (Kwacha) as well as get a Zambian SIM card. The procedure to get a SIM card is quite tedious and they even take a photo. But after one hour we manage.



Finally, we drive to the Victoria Falls Waterfront Lodge campsite. It is a busy place, several Overlander trucks are parked up; they have plenty of tents, a huge bar with a terrace and a wood fired pizza oven all directly located next to the Zambezi river. A short downpour cools everything down a bit, could this be a good sign for the coming raining season?



Would you fancy a Croc-Pizza?

10.10.2019 Livingstone

During colonial times when Zambia was still called North-West Rhodesia, Livingstone was the capital until 1935. Some buildings of colonial style architecture can still be found. The city is larger than expected, but let alone the heat made us skip a stroll through the city on foot.





For market research we move today to the Maramba Campsite. We are always interested to see and try out different places, so we get an overview of what is available and maybe there is something even better. The Maramba Camp is less modern than the Victoria Waterfront Lodge, but it is more relaxed and has even wildlife. Elephants are passing by the camp to get to the main road for a drink in the nearby stream.



With the sun setting the security guards arrive. With such well-armed guards we will have a peaceful night!

11.10.2019 Kalomo, Dundumwenze Gate Kafue Nationalpark

We stock up a few more groceries, fuel up the truck and off we are. Next to the fuel station two zebras are grazing and at the first moment we think they are sculptures – until one starts to wiggle its tail....

We are on our way to Kafue National Park. At the police check behind Livingstone the female police officer tells us “You are driving a nice car” and waves us through. At the next police check behind Zimba the police man is wondering: „Oh, this is your house“.

While driving we are on the look out for a place to spend the night, but it seems difficult to find a quiet and safe location.



We pass through Zimba and Kalomo. From 1902 until 1907 Kalomo was the first capital of North-West Rhodesia. The place is very busy and chaotic, definitely too busy for us to stay here for the night.





In Kalomo is the turn off to Kafue NP and we hope that the about 90 km long access road is quieter. However, the density of settlements is surprisingly high, one village follows after the next. As the gravel road is quite good, we continue until we reach the Dundumwenze Gate of the Kafue national park.



Our plan / hope works out, the park ranger at the gate is friendly and lets us park for the night just in front of the gate; we do not have to look for another place anymore.





12.10.2019 Kafue Nationalpark

Early morning, we are at the park office at Dundumwenze Gate and pay the park entry fees just for one day. We want to get an impression of the park first and see if it is worth staying longer. We are told that we have to exit the park by 9:00 a.m. the following day.

We drive north through the Nazhila Plains, but see only very few wildlife. The animals are extremely shy and very often we see the dust clouds from the fleeing animals before we see the animals themselves. A very clear sign of strong poaching pressure.





The landscape changes, from open plains to dense forests. Low hanging branches and narrow trees are a challenge for us. If the trees grow into the road, have low thick branches, have been pushed over by an elephant into the road or if a tree trunk is at the side of the road, we won't fit through. At parts it is quite a struggle to drive through this 70 km section. Several times the axe is our last resort. We both have to constantly watch out for obstacles from top, bottom and the sides....



Soon the first Tsetse flies are bothering us, a terrible insect. Tsetse flies are like horse flies, their bite is very painful and they can transmit the Sleeping Sickness. They like the Mopane forests and are attracted by warmth and movement. Our Unimog seems for them like a huge buffalo on the move. This is the reason they are attracted to cars and love to hitch a ride on cars. The tsetse fly has a huge negative economic impact in Africa, as vast areas can not be settled as the fly attacks mainly cattle which can die from their bites.

Our aircon in the driver cabin is not really functioning and we usually drive with open windows which means we are under constant attack by the tsetse flies. We try to kill them or chase them back out. Closing the windows is almost not an option as the heat in the cabin would build up to unbearable conditions...

Hunting Tsetse flies while driving is quite a distraction, it is hard to pay attention to the road at the same time and it's getting quite hectic in the driver's cabin. Just to hit them doesn't help much, they are like made from rubber.



The Hippo Bay Campsite located at the southern end of the Itezhi-Tezhi dam, does make up for the long, hot, overgrown and Tsetse infested drive. Due to the drought, the lake has retreated significantly, for almost 1 km. We are told that in a good raining season the lake will flood the camp.

