THE LONG RUN'S
12TH ANNUAL MEMBER MEETING
BORANA LODGE & LENGISHU, KENYA

THEME: ACCELERATING CHANGE IN YOUR ORGANISATION, LANDSCAPE, COMMUNITIES, AND BEYOND.

SATURDAY 22ND OCTOBER - WEDNESDAY 26TH OCTOBER 2022
Each year, The Long Run community comes together to celebrate its shared mission to protect ecosystems for the benefit of all. It’s an inspiring and enlightening time out from the everyday exchanging ideas, learning from on-the-ground changemakers, and building life-long connections. This year, after a three year pause due to Covid-19, over 40 members gathered at Borana Conservancy in Laikipia, Kenya hosted by members Borana Lodge and Lengishu House.

Our gathering was rich, diverse, and multi-faceted as always. It demonstrated that sharing experiences, expertise and knowledge helps members to push boundaries individually. It also enables The Long Run to drive change for the well-being of the planet and people globally. The outcomes of our discussions are summarised in this report.

Borana and its extensive community leant itself to this years’ theme of accelerating change. One of The Long Run’s newest Global Ecosphere Retreats®, there is no better place to see first-hand what the highest sustainable standards across all the 4Cs look like from solar farms to community liaison officers and big-picture landscape restoration. Borana Conservancy is home to one of Kenya’s most successful rhino landscapes, is a pioneer in holistic and conservation-led ranching, has recently built a 4C community education centre, and is continually pushing the bar with its regenerative Waitabit Farm. The spirit and warmth exuded by every single team member at Borana is a testament to the destination’s shared passion and ethos.

The Long Run team would like to thank the Dyer family, lodge hosts Milli Musee at Borana Lodge and Sheila Nemali at Lengishu, and the extended Borana team for all their generosity and hard work at making our Annual Meeting a roaring success.

We look forward to welcoming members to next year’s gathering at Nikoi Island, Indonesia.

Until next year,

Delphine, Anne, Joy, and Holly
Borana is dedicated to the sustainable conservation of land and wildlife and 100 per cent of tourism profits are reinvested into this purpose. Its holistic approach, via The Long Run’s 4Cs, commits tourism, ranching, and other enterprises to building local livelihoods and enhancing ecosystem integrity.

Borana Lodge and permaculture farm is owned and run by the Dyer family. Since inheriting the ranch in the 1980s, Michael and Nicky Dyer have transformed Borana into a regenerative success story including building one of the region’s first ecolodges in the early 1990s, supporting the creation of Laikipia’s first community-owned ecolodge on neighbouring Il’Ngwesi conservancy, reintroducing black rhino, and more recently removing fences with neighbouring Lewa to create a 90,000-acre connected habitat. In 2011, the journey towards financial sustainability began by creating a circle of investors with properties on Borana Conservancy — Laragai House, Sirai House, Arijuju, and latest Lengishu House— that underwrite the conservancy’s conservation costs.
Alongside financial sustainability, to ensure conservation work can continue perpetually, Borana believes everyone has a right to a secure environment and an equitable share of natural resources. Michael Dyer comments, “We have a lot to do in our sphere of influence to create opportunities for everyone. At Borana, we do not believe in fortress conservation where you spend millions of dollars to build fences and security. Instead, we invest in social capital in the community. The community is our ring of protection in the fight to protect endangered species.”

Borana Lodge joined The Long Run in 2015 to help structure and communicate this holistic model. Michael comments, “It was an eye-opener on how to do things better via the 4Cs (community, culture, conservation, and commerce), which we were already actively involved in but didn’t have a system to document and quantify.” After five years, Borana Lodge achieved The Long Run’s rigorous and GSTC-recognised Global Ecosphere Retreat standard. It was incredible to witness first-hand the pride this recognition has brought to the entire team.

During the Annual Meeting, Long Run members were hosted at Borana Lodge and Lengishu House.
ACCELERATING CHANGE IN YOUR LANDSCAPE

After lunch and a welcome from Delphine Malleret-King, Executive Director of The Long Run, and Michael Dyer, owner of Borana Conservancy, the group heads out on foot from Borana Lodge to Pride Rock to explore the Borana landscape.

At the foot of Pride Rock, members gather on a rocky outcrop to hear from three members about what it takes to drive landscape change beyond boundaries. Michael introduces the session:

“Everything that we achieve collectively at The Long Run is about protecting, restoring, and regenerating ecosystems and connecting habitats. This is more important than ever in the current climate — there are increasing pressures on resources and so land use and management is critical to protect wildlife, landscapes, and communities.”
MICHAEL DYER, MANAGING DIRECTOR, BORANA CONSERVANCY ON THE LAIKIPIA CONSERVANCY MOVEMENT.

“When we started here on our conservation journey, we made rhino habitat available to Lewa because their rhino programme had been so successful and the one thing we know about black rhinos is that they need space. What started as a very small project with 11 rhinos in 11,000 acres has turned into over 200 rhinos on a 90,000-acre landscape. We’ve now got the stage where we need to expand that progression further and the logical progression is to bring in surrounding community-owned land and so we have a successful project up in Serra where there’s a new rhino sanctuary, and we are now looking at a rangeland expansion plan that will see a continuous rhino habitat across Laikipia. We also have an elephant corridor that goes up to Mount Kenya and we’re now hoping to secure that in perpetuity.”

ANDREW DIXON, CO-FOUNDER NIKOI ISLAND ON THE CREATION OF A MARINE PROTECTED AREA IN INDONESIA

“We’re in a Marine Protected Area that is about 1300 square kilometres and there’s another MPA further out that is 10 times the size of that. The Indonesian government created it in 2007 but didn’t do anything about it - it’s just a line on a map. We didn’t have much hope for its future because there was no plan for it but that changed when we met NGO Conservation International. They said rather than do a no-take zone around your island why don’t you go after the whole MPA. To do that we needed to establish a local NGO so we did that in partnership with a group that was already setting up. So, with the help of Conservation International, we did baseline studies and then managed to create a no-take zone across the whole MPA. This happened in 2022 and now we’ve got a lot of attention with other NGOs wanting to get involved and expand the project. It’s really exciting. Collaborating with NGOs was really key for the success of this project and opened our eyes about how to expand initiatives beyond your own borders.”
SARAH TOMPKINS, CO-FOUNDER & DIRECTOR, SAMARA KAROO RESERVE ON A BIG PICTURE VISION IN THE KAROO, SOUTH AFRICA.

“Our journey started about 25 years ago when we knew nothing about conservation but went to a region called the Great Karoo, fell in love with the landscape, and put together 11 farms creating a continuous 67,000 acres and then we thought what now? My husband believes science should drive everything in life, so we consulted one of the most eminent conservation ecologists and zoologists in South Africa. He told us that we had huge biodiversity - five of South Africa’s nine biomes. Once scientists had done vegetation mapping, we took a good hard look and thought we’re sitting on a landscape but what are we doing for the community? How can we drive sustainable development? Somebody suggested ecotourism. That was 15-years-ago. Of course, going into tourism has its ups and downs but it’s been remarkable because we’ve got to meet people like you. We then started to reintroduce all the animals that used to roam the Karoo and eventually brought back the first cheetah to live in the Karoo for 130 years. During that cheetah’s 14 years on the reserve, she contributed 3 percent of South Africa’s cheetah population. Also brought back the first desert-adapted black rhino in the region and eventually lions and elephants. It’s been extraordinary to see how bringing back an apex predator has changed the landscape. But really, we’re just a small proportion of a bigger picture landscape we hope to be part of, linking three neighbouring national parks to create corridors or ‘space’ — a 3-million-acre footprint that will go from the Karoo down the sea.”

Sarah also explained to the group how during Covid they realised that they could introduce ranching onto the reserve to make the commerce element more resilient. She continues, “We then embarked on an amazing journey - not only having another revenue stream but also exploring with local farmers what holistic grazing looks like. This gave us a brilliant reason to properly engage with local landowners, broadening our understanding of place.”

TECHNOLOGY IN CONSERVATION

Before dinner at Borana Lodge, members heard from Grant Burden from 51 Degrees who presented how LORAWAN and Earth Ranger apps are providing technological solutions to wildlife conservation including:

- Allowing different services and stakeholders to access the same real-time data within a landscape aids greater collaboration and efficiency.
- Mapping invasive species.
- Development of new reporting templates.

- Bringing all relevant information under one platform screen to help managers make timely decisions.
After spending the morning tracking rhino with Borana’s team of rangers, members return to Borana Lodge for working sessions on understanding and communicating positive impact to ensure everyone from guests to employees are on board with the sustainable journey.

**ACCELERATING CHANGE IN YOUR ORGANISATION**

The group hears from three Long Run members reflecting on their sustainability journey.

Some key outcomes include:

- Investment in conservation and community initiatives must run in tandem.

- Employment and other diversified income streams are the best way to empower communities.

- 4C impact work offers a good base to develop meaningful and unique guest experiences.

- The sustainability journey never stops but continuously improves gathering more stakeholders along the way.
Jeremiah Mutisya, CEO, Basecamp Explorer Kenya

Jeremiah shares the story of Basecamp Explorer Kenya which started 25 years ago around a bonfire. In 2021, Basecamp Explorer Kenya and Saruni Lodges came together, expanding reach into Northern Kenya. Basecamp now has nine camps under its portfolio across seven conservancies. Basecamp Explorer Kenya incorporates the 4Cs in all operations and has a strong community ethos. Its employment model promotes female empowerment as does its successful Basecamp Maasai Brand (BMB) — a community-based handicraft workshop that empowers disadvantaged Maasai women to diversify their income streams. Ninety-nine percent of employees are Kenyan, and 70 percent are from local communities. Basecamp has also been part of the Koyiaki Guiding School to train future guides. Basecamp enjoys being part of The Long Run because of practical resources and training, support, collaboration, peer learning and cross-pollination.

Eligah Mutanda, 4C Officer, Segera

Segera is a proud founder of The Long Run and continues to champion the 4Cs through projects including planting three million trees to reforest the conservancy and creating employment for local women. Segera hopes to soon introduce rhinos in the conservancy and partner with Earth Ranger to monitor wildlife.

Through an artist in residence programme, Segera provides a platform for Kenyan creatives to showcase evocative artworks from prints to films, monumental bronze, stone and steel sculptures, and outdoor projections that are visible from just about every vantage point. This encourages guests to actively engage in identity and cultural issues.

Segera uses visual and written storytelling to enhance engagement with guests, highlighting how their stay positively impacts the 4Cs.

Sergio Chiarandini, Linking Tourism & Conservation, Thailand

Sergio has spent 15 years in the field of ecosystem monitoring, management, and conservation. He continues to expand his knowledge and interest in Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, Integrated Coastal Zone Management, remote sensing techniques for biodiversity monitoring, ecosystem management, and wildlife accounting. He believes that the work of The Long Run is crucial to demonstrate how tourism and the private sector can meet the SDGs and biodiversity global goals. Long Run members also play an important part in helping more people connect with nature — connection leads to protection.
The Long Run’s Communications Manager, Holly Tuppen, leads a panel discussion reflecting on what works and doesn’t work when it comes to communicating a commitment to sustainability to the trade, guests, media, and employees.

Communicating positive impact is a fundamental part of the 4Cs and long-term planning. Without buy-in and engagement from every touch point, from employees to guests, it’s impossible to expand a purpose-driven vision and mission.

Four panellists shed light on what works and doesn’t work in gaining buy-in from different stakeholders:

- Visiting all hotels to audit and update regularly.
- Encouraging grassroots engagement with sustainability and a bottom-up communications strategy.
- Keeping sustainability relevant and engaging through activations and team building sessions.
- Running sustainability training throughout the year.
- Creating internal communications e.g. viral video series that encourages buy-in to specific campaigns like Plastic Free 2022.
- Making sure teams understand the importance of communicating sustainability to guests.
- Building strong local partnerships with NGOs and other community organisations at each property.

Sustainability is in the DNA of the Six Senses group. Each hotel has a sustainability manager, and this has helped to disseminate clear guidelines across all the properties. The following actions have been important in maintaining engagement:

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- Creating internal communications e.g. viral video series that encourages buy-in to specific campaigns like Plastic Free 2022.
- Making sure teams understand the importance of communicating sustainability to guests.
- Building strong local partnerships with NGOs and other community organisations at each property.
The success of communicating sustainability to guests at Grootbos has been down to lots of subtle interactions rather than anything too arduous or ‘lecturing’. For Sean, most guests don’t care about sustainability, but by the time they leave, they have a lot more awareness about why some of these actions matter. Sean recommends:

- Education is critical but it has to be part of the experience rather than a side note e.g., comes and see where the food is grown and why it tastes so good.
- Incorporating sustainability initiatives in every guest activity is important. Finding different or unusual outlets for sustainability messaging e.g., the recently launched Groothos Florilegium is a unique experience for the guest and highlights the 4Cs.

Experiences include a foraging walk with Hunter & Gatherer Letilet and visiting the Kenya Birds of Prey Trust at the only vulture rehabilitation centre in the Masai Mara to learn how this keystone species maintain the functioning, health, and resilience of the Maasai Mara inhabitants and ecosystem. Making the 4Cs and sustainability accessible is key.

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After hearing from panellists, members moved between breakout groups to discuss how to communicate your sustainable journey and commitment to the 4Cs to different stakeholders. Some key findings include:

**HOW TO GET YOUR TEAM TO UNDERSTAND AND COMMIT TO THE 4CS AND BE CHANGE MAKERS OUTSIDE THE WORKPLACE.**

- Educating children can be a great way to create impact beyond workplace.
- Provide simple examples that are practical and relevant and relate to day to day lives.
- Bring to focus what matters and why.
- Build trust within teams so it’s an open forum - listen to one another and talk about challenges and successes.
- Recognise that employees are the greatest assets in communicating sustainability to guests.
- Empower employees with knowledge.
- Ensure that employees own the story and experiences.
- Explore opportunities to provide incentives and instil pride in 4Cs achievement.
- Make sure there’s shared value in the sustainability journey.
- Build sustainability commitment into performance evaluation.

**HOW TO GET GUESTS ENGAGED AND UNDERSTAND SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES.**

- Continual engagement and emotional engagement - it needs to touch all the senses with numerous touchpoints.
- Worth investing in activities that have a long-term impact like a loyalty programme or tailoring sustainability activities for children.
- Help to bring a better sense of place through employees - how can their perspective and knowledge be a bigger part of the experience and help to communicate the 4Cs?
- Subliminal messaging is effective to create multiple touchpoint.
HOW TO GET MEDIA COMMUNICATING SUSTAINABILITY, POSITIVE IMPACT AND THE 4CS.

- It’s important to turn your mission and vision into stories but also tangible facts and figures, like the 4C Impact Statement.
- Check your images — who are they appealing to? What are they communicating? Are they lifting your purpose or letting it down?
- Have a strong call to action; what’s the new hook?
- On sustainability, it’s important to handhold journalists who might find some of the topics overwhelming. Providing as much information as possible, in easily digestible copy, will help.
- Use partners like The Long Run to frame your story in the bigger picture.

HOW TO WORK WITH TRAVEL TRADE COMMITTED TO SELLING POSITIVE IMPACT TRAVEL.

- Identify which trade understand your mission and purpose and prioritise those relationships.
- Make an effort to build understanding on both sides — what trade needs and what lodges need.
- Ditch the pitch with the bed configurations, the pretty bathrooms etc. — talk to trade about positive impact instead.
- Celebrate people; trade wants more good news, people stories.
- Facilitate understanding through fam trips — how can these better embed sustainable learning throughout.
- Make sustainability, impact, and the 4Cs central to videography and photography, so trade are more compelled to share.
Back of House tour at Borana Lodge and Lengishu

After lunch, members split into two groups to explore the back-of-house environmental management and Borana Lodge and Lengishu, led by the properties’ sustainability champions David Karanja and Laurence Ngugi. Some highlights of the tour included the recycling centre and Borana’s impressive solar farm which powers Borana Lodge and Lengishu.

Anne-Kathrin Zschiegner, The Long Run’s Technical Advisor, comments, “The tour highlighted Borana’s journey regarding the sustainable use of resources and how monitoring its carbon footprint and investing in employee training has greatly helped Borana and Lengishu to steadily improve practices over the years.”
EVENING TALKS

After sundowners around the pool at Lengishu, members listen to two evening talks.

THE BOOKING PROCESS WITH ELOISE DYER, MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER, BORANA LODGE & LENGISHU

Eloise shared with members when and how Borana introduces guests to the 4Cs during the booking process and how it has adapted its conservation fee model to ensure more money goes directly to 4C projects.

In 2022 Borana Lodge changed its rates structure to reflect a larger contribution to conservation per bed night and in turn, make it easier to market the impact tourism at Borana Lodge has.

The lodge now charges an all-inclusive rate where 24% of this rate is a contribution to conservation costs (replacing the traditional conservation fees). This percentage is fixed, meaning that the actual amount fluctuates with the seasons - in peak season guests will be paying a higher contribution to the cost of conservation to reflect the fact that the conservancy, as well as the lodge, are busier.

Agent sales margins are taken, like before, from the total nightly cost less the contribution to conservation costs. Under the previous system, this contribution was a fixed conservation fee. Changing this to a fixed percentage means that regardless of the season or the method that guests use to book, each guest makes a contribution of 24% of their total stay to conservation.

Borana Conservancy will report transparently and accurately on how these conservation costs are raised and spent, this will be audited by a globally accredited and recognised third party.

https://www.boranaconservancy.com/financials

NEWS FROM PREFERRED BY NATURE WITH HANDO HAIN, THE LONG RUN TRUSTEE AND DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY AND INNOVATIONS, PREFERRED BY NATURE

The Long Run has been hosted by Preferred by Nature’s Sustainable Tourism Programme since March 2020 and by joining forces, we continue to accelerate the expansion of nature conservation. Preferred by Nature works to support better land management and business practices that benefit people, nature, and the climate in 100+ countries. Preferred by Nature provides an opportunity for our members to strengthen their performance and continue to lead in the biodiversity, restoration, and conservation tourism space. Hando spoke through some specific opportunities including an new Ecosystem Restoration Standard and Carbon Footprint Management Standard.
After a game drive, members come together in Borana’s new Education Centre —Mazingira Yetu— for a day of immersion in Borana’s wider community and understanding how members can accelerate the development of local sustainable economies.

Eloise Dyer, Marketing Manager for Borana Conservancy tells us more about Mazingira Yetu:

“Conservation education and sustainable development initiatives for communities living adjacent to Protected Areas are essential for the effective, long term conservation of wildlife and landscapes. Many young people are now growing up in degraded landscapes and even at the schools they attend environmental science is taught theoretically offering no exposure to intact functioning ecosystems. The concern is that living in a degraded landscape could become for many the new normal. Our environmental education centre Mazingira Yetu offers the opportunity for learning about the importance of natural ecosystems along with the importance of understanding the role of soil; hydrology; grasslands; forests and how these elements contribute to sustaining life. This is particularly important given that we live in a landscape that is very marginal with rainfall and the seasonality of rainfall is becoming increasingly erratic perhaps due to the impact of climate change.

The project was launched in April 2022 when a conservation education officer and an education assistant were employed. Following inception meetings with all the Headteachers and environmental teachers from the ten schools that Borana Education Support Program supports, the project has been named Mazingira Yetu which means ‘our environment’ in Swahili.
“Alongside building the centre we have launched a regular programme of Environmental Education Days (EEPs). Our specially-converted school bus named the ‘Mazingira Express’ collects groups of schoolchildren (Grade 5 and 6), their teachers and adults from community groups surrounding Borana and brings them into the Conservancy for the day.

The EEPs increase access to important landscapes for indigenous communities, helping to strengthen connections, and explore the value of conservation in practical ways. The day’s aim is to foster support for conservation initiatives, build knowledge about conservation issues, including black rhino, and inspire participants to spread key messages to secondary audiences, for example family and community members.

This will enable the wider community to take positive action to conserve the conservancies surrounding the Lewa-Borana Landscape.

The long-term future of Borana Conservancy, and of all protected areas across Laikipia, Kenya and Africa as a whole, will depend on people placing a high natural capital value on conservation and wildlife habitats and having the skills to manage habitats in ways that support both human livelihoods and wildlife. Only through valuing natural capital will functioning ecosystems expand.”

SESSION 1: MONITORING COMMUNITY IMPACT WITH SAPA

Borana Conservancy’s Community Liaison Officers, Ochen Maiyani, Community Liaison and Development Manager for Borana and Lolldaiga Conservancies and Abdi Sora, General Manager, Borana Conservancy talk members through the how, why, and what of the recently completed Social Assessment of Protected Areas (SAPA).

The comprehensive audit of community attitudes and challenges has provided the conservancy with a robust understanding of the surrounding communities and shapes Borana’s decision-making on community and conservation work.
SESSION 2: CELEBRATING ONE OF KENYA’S FIRST COMMUNITY-OWNED LODGES

In the 1990s, Borana and neighbouring Lewa secured a grant to help the Il’Ngwesi people, their immediate neighbours to the north, establish an ecolodge. Built, owned, and run by the Il’Ngwesi, it was one of Kenya’s first community-owned lodges and remains a leading example of communities taking charge of the conservation agenda.

To continue our community empowerment theme, members hear from Kip Olepolos, former guide and Maasai warrior and Chairman of the Il Ngwesi Community Conservancy about progress, setbacks, and future hopes for community-run conservancies.

SESSION 2: COMMUNITY ROUNDTABLE ON WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A LOCAL CHANGEMAKER.

The world faces increasing social and environmental challenges and there is an urgent need to challenge the status quo. Change at scale can only happen by working together, by addressing social and environmental issues at the same time and by including all stakeholders. This is a fundamental part of The Long Run’s holistic vision — change must involve all players. However, this can be challenging, particularly in less fortunate and more vulnerable places, where progress from the inside is slow.

In this roundtable session, hosted by Milli Musee, Borana Lodge Manager, members hear from different perspectives what it takes to drive meaningful change towards a more sustainable future at a local level.

During the roundtable, we hear from:

- Adbi Sora, General Manager, Borana Conservancy.
- Charlie Dyer, Kisima Foundation Manager.
- Pauline Kauwak, Borana Mobile Clinic Nurse.
- Josephine Ndiras, Mukgodo Girls Empowerment Programme.
- Ochen Maiyani, Community Liaison and Development Manager for Borana and Lolldaiga Conservancies.
- Michael Dyer, Borana Conservancy Managing Director.
This was a lively and engaging conversation expertly moderated by Milli. Here are some standout quotes:

“I’m a mother of four beautiful daughters and I just couldn’t let them go through what others had been through with FGM (female genital mutilation). It’s a very sensitive issue so some friends thought I was going crazy when I made a stand. But what really pushed me is seeing all these girls and women and seeing that we have so much untapped potential in their light and intelligence.” — Josephine Ndiras, Mukgodo Girls Empowerment Programme.

“Before you can make a change anywhere you have to undergo a personal transformation. It always starts with you as an individual. It starts by looking out and broadening our perspective.” — Adbi Sora, General Manager, Borana Conservancy.

“The key is to start small and see where it goes. Even if you set out to change just one life, it’s worth making a start.” — Charlie Dyer, Kisima Foundation Manager.

To be a changemaker you must move out of your comfort zone and face adversity before you can make a positive change. You may lose friends, and you may find that people don’t want to cooperate, but you must trust that eventually, you will get through.” — Milli Musee, Borana Lodge Manager.

“It’s not easy to be a bridge between projects and ideas but what keeps me going is knowing I’m doing the right thing by the community. We live in a very social system, and you have to look carefully and dissect everyone’s role and needs before taking any action. That’s how any social system works.” — Ochen Maiyani, Community Liaison and Development Manager for Borana and Lolldaiga Conservancies

“Initially, when we started the mobile clinic, most people were nervous about family planning but soon women started to come and men now join them, too.” — Pauline Kauwak, Borana Mobile Clinic Nurse.

“You can be a champion in your own right but for continuity, you always must make sure there’s a new generation coming through to support the cause. It’s why we offer mentoring for anyone wanting to help.” — Josephine Ndiras, Mukgodo Girls Empowerment Programme.
The critical role of female empowerment when it comes to overcoming the climate crisis and social inequality.

How female empowerment issues can be surprisingly similar across the world.

What it takes for individuals to drive change in their communities and why they need all the support they can get.

That individuals are fundamental in driving change, and we all need to identify who these trailblazers are.

That driving change comes at a personal cost, sometimes.

Community engagement takes an enormous amount of time and patience but is critical to conservation work and the 4Cs.

Collaboration comes in all shapes and sizes and requires conversations across all levels of a community.

We often think of community as something on the inside, but the community is everything — wherever we work, if we have a purpose for the greater good, we are part of a unique community. Community is always central.

EXPLORING BORANA’S HEADQUARTERS

After these sessions, members explored Borana’s headquarters to see the main offices of the conservancy, the horse stables, workshops, recycling facilities, stores, maintenance areas, and the ranger office.
SESSION 4: PITCH YOUR CHALLENGE

The Long Run believes that we can accomplish so much more together than we can apart. Echoing one of the benefits of membership, where we match-make member problems with potential solutions, this session provided four members with the chance to pitch a challenge and seek solutions in brainstorming sessions.

The challenges pitched and solutions suggested were:

**CHALLENGE: HOW CAN WE EMERGE LOCAL AND LOCAL?**

Some suggested solutions:

- Work out ways to influence current suppliers:
  - Engage the suppliers and invite them in-house to see why they are being asked to do things in certain ways.
  - Support suppliers with initial capital to make changes.
- Invest in products and employees in-house:
  - Training managers/staff to understand sustainability champions and identify sustainable suppliers.
  - Consider putting up hydroponics, and aquaponics to reduce dependency.
- Give suppliers packaging to work with to cut down plastic.
- Guest education is important to communicate seasonality and why some items are not available.
- Report on sourcing changes and the impact it has on overall carbon footprint, plastic use etc. to increase engagement and understanding.

**CHALLENGE: HOW CAN WE EMBED COMMUNITY INTO OUR PURPOSE-DRIVEN CONSERVATION ITINERARIES AND CONTENT?**

Some suggested solutions:

- Seek a community-based story per month to embed throughout communications.
- Make sure video and image content is infused with a community perspective.
- Create collaborative relationships with communities and storytellers on the ground to promote stories of change and impact.
- Pool content across partners — DMCs, destinations, and accommodations are looking for the same stories.
**Challenge: How can we support the excess number of applicants who apply to join our hospitality training?**

Some suggested solutions:

- Build partnerships with the local tourism industry including restaurants.
- Build partnerships with other organisations that can invest in complementary programmes e.g., education and agriculture.
- Consider mentoring and alumni mentoring.
- Create a smaller-scale, easier induction course to get people started.
- Offer self-study material for those that don’t get on the course the first time around.

**Challenge: How can we plan for succession so that the ecosystem we work within remains protected in perpetuity?**

Some suggested solutions:

- Review options that are already in place for the succession of privately protected areas. The Long Run could help with research here.
- Create a Trust so that land is governed by carefully selected trustees.
- Decide on priorities — maintain the business or maintain conservation? Maybe cannot have both.
- Look into organisations like The Nature Conservancy.

**Session 5: Liberia: A new ecotourism destination**

After a lively Diwali dance led by Long Run Affiliate Member Hitesh Mehta, Owner of HM Design, Hitesh guides members through his incredibly adventurous journey to support a recent project helping to establish ecolodges in Liberia to protect the remaining forest and increasingly endangered chimpanzees. A project founded on the principles of One Health.

**Post dinner film night: Screening of The Elephant Queen**

After dinner members embark on an epic journey of family, courage, and coming home with a screening of *The Elephant Queen*, a genre-crossing wildlife documentary, uniquely crafted as a character-driven narrative. The film’s mobile cinema team, which has shown the documentary to over 10,000 schools across Kenya in the last year, met with members to discuss the social and environmental impact of the film pre-screening. It’s a staggering outreach programme that has helped to spark conversation around human-wildlife conflict with over 60,000 people so far.
After an active and adrenaline-packed start exploring the conservancy on e-bikes, horseriding, joining the Borana Rangers for a CrossFit session, or taking a morning bush walk, members convened at Borana Lodge to explore how to advocate for meaningful change within the travel industry.

**ACCELERATING CHANGE IN THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY AND BEYOND**

A panel discussion led by The Long Run Executive Director Delphine Mallaret-King explored successes and failures in driving change across the travel industry and beyond. Members hear from:

**SESSION 1: DRIVING CHANGE ACROSS THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY**

A panel discussion led by The Long Run Executive Director Delphine Mallaret-King explored successes and failures in driving change across the travel industry and beyond. Members hear from:

**ARNOLD MEYER, EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN TSWALU AND FIREBLADE AVIATION**

“In a sector that isn’t sustainable, we’re on a journey to find meaning, and the 4Cs can help us identify the best opportunities to have a positive impact where possible.”

Arnold explains Fireblade Aviation’s journey to becoming more sustainable via The Long Run’s 4C model and highlights some of the steps that Fireblade has taken to push boundaries including:

- How to conciliate aviation and biodiversity: conserving abandoned wetlands that sit next to the airstrip.
- Promoting diversity in aviation careers: through training, internships, and school talks.
- Becoming more resource efficient where possible: rainwater harvesting, solar panels on aircraft hangers, and transforming a car park into a vegetable garden.
- At the broader level: funding research into how to make sustainable aviation more accessible and decrease fuel use wherever possible.
Julie Cheetham, Managing Director of Weeva and Executive Sustainability at Nianova

“Weeva has been designed to make sustainability more accessible, drawing on the rigour of the Global Ecosphere Retreat® standard and the 4Cs.”

The whole premise of Weeva is to ensure that more small and large tourism businesses have access to sustainability information and tracking.

Weeva is a 360-degree sustainability management platform that guides tourism businesses through small actionable steps that have a big impact. The platform is based on The Long Run’s 4Cs and will therefore be incredibly easy for members to adopt as a reporting and monitoring platform. It will be available to Long Run members at a discounted price, which the team will clarify shortly. Interestingly, most of the demand is coming from tour operators who want to see the substance behind the stories.

Hando Hain, The Long Run Trustee and Director of Strategy and Innovations, Preferred by Nature

“As the world’s only not-for-profit sustainability certification body, we’re the bridge between the certification industry and advocacy.”

The Long Run’s host organisation, Preferred by Nature, uses certification to drive change across multiple industries from forestry to rice, and believes that certification can help the travel industry, too. Some highlights include:

- The point of certification is to drive transparency — it’s setting the bar that everyone must meet.
- Certification helps translate policies into actionable change.
Waitabit Farm is run by Llewellyn Dyer who believes in systems which operate as close to nature as possible. His goal is to leave this corner of Borana Conservancy healthier and more biodiverse than he found it using regenerative and permaculture farming methods. The farm provides the bulk of produce for Borana Lodge and the Conservancy, adhering to a ‘farm to fork’ ethos.

Llewellyn says, “Conservation is not enough. We to think about how we can use agriculture and land in a more efficient way. We want to design an ecosystem that will benefit many generations in the future, not just our needs now.”

On a two-hour tour of the three-acre vegetable garden and surrounding pastures, which buzzes and hums with beetles, dragon flies, and bees, members witnessed everything from bathtub composting to wildlife-friendly vegetable planting while admiring ripening avocados and sweet-smelling figs. Llewellyn continues, “You’ll see messy patches and that’s deliberate; we leave things messy so that insects can thrive. Nature is not straight lines, it’s chaos. We need that chaos. The edge of chaos is where all life is. That’s what biodiversity is.”

Considering the recent drought across northern Kenya, Waitabit’s innovative water conservation system was particularly topical — by creating ditches on the contour of the landscape (known as swales) connected to a network of small dams there is less need for irrigation. Instead, runoff is slowed, and water is naturally retained. Llewellyn tells us that the farm uses the same amount of water in one year as one of the private houses on the conservancy.

The tour is available to guests staying on Borana as well as local farmers, to try and encourage wider uptake of regenerative farming methods within Laikipia and beyond. After the tour we experienced a delicious lunch made entirely from farm produce.
SESSION 3: IMAGINING THE LONG RUN COMMUNITY IN 2030

After lunch, members spent the afternoon under a giant fig tree on Waitabit Farm imagining The Long Run community in 2030. The Long Run team kicked off discussions outlining success and challenges and how we can continue to drive impact. It was an incredibly productive session, demonstrating the strength of the community and will help to shape our strategy and renewed mission coming soon!
Before tucking into a BBQ at Lengishu, members heard from Jack Dyer and Richard Van Aardt, founders of The Well-Hung Butcher and True Range, about raising Climate Positive beef.

“It’s not the cow, it’s the how,” Jack Dyer explains having spent much of his career rebutting over-simplified arguments about beef consumption and the climate. He continues, “The higher carbon emissions of the beef industry are not caused by pasture-raised, natural cattle, they are the result of industrialised feedlots. Our suppliers use holistic rangeland management systems to promote their pastures’ biodiversity and keep the grass in its most active growth phase. During this active growth phase, the grass converts enough carbon into sugars to create balance. That nutrient-rich grass then gives our beef its intense, long-lasting flavour.

He continues, “This approach is not new, we are replicating a far older system that herbivores in massive migratory herds were doing on a much grander scale for millennia.” Its ethos is to work in harmony with the environment at every stage of the livestock breeding, butchering, and ageing process. Another important part of ensuring meat is climate positive is eating the whole animal.

In Laikipia, and across much of Eastern Africa, cattle are an important cultural and economic asset. However, the tradition of ranching is at risk from desertification — caused by overgrazing in increasingly shrunken landscapes and climate-related drought. It is thought that 90 per cent of Kenya could be desertified by the end of the century. This is leading to a loss of culture and income which is having knock-on effects on local lives causing civil unrest, kids less likely to attend school, cattle raiding, and emigration. Richie comments, with urgency, “We need to do cattle right and provide a model for others to copy before it’s too late. This means going back to understanding the ecological processes at play and looking at land management differently.”

Conservation efforts that can work alongside ranching will therefore be more successful, and long-term than those that don’t. Raising climate-positive beef is of critical importance in this context, which is exactly what The Well-Hung Butcher has set out to achieve.
WRAP UP AND FAREWELLLS

Before going separate ways, members came together to reflect on the last few days and say goodbye until the next time. Such an intense immersion into our shared mission builds bonds that run deep, and by the last day, there is a palpable sense of connection.

It’s something we’re incredibly proud of at The Long Run. Much of what we do is about identifying tangible outcomes, measuring for the sake of transparency, and ensuring that science and fact guide everything we do to pursue true positive impact. However, sometimes, like this moment, it’s the intangible sense of belonging and collective purpose that bubbles up and guides us forward. Here are some of the highlights mentioned by members in our final session together:

- Understanding how everything is interconnected and how the 4Cs model helps to demonstrate that.
- How we can introduce conservation to the next generation.
- Incredible to get people together in person after a tough couple of years for the travel industry.
- Breaking down boundaries between different parts of travel’s value chain and understanding how we can help those with a shared vision and mission.
- Learning about the challenges that others are also facing and working together to overcome them.
- Witnessing how to incorporate the latest technology in conservation.
- Hearing from local changemakers and understanding their personal journey.
- Seeing the commitment, it takes to drive meaningful change.
- Understanding the dialogue that’s needed to get all stakeholders involved in successful conservation and community work.
- Being welcomed in and feeling closer to the centre of The Long Run community.
- Being humbled by the commitment of others.
- Witnessing the high level of transparency in place at Borana from community outreach to environmental management.
- An empowering sense of togetherness.
WHAT OUR MEMBERS SAID

“Thank you all for the incredible support you have provided to Borana Lodge and Lengishu from when we became members of The Long Run and up to the point of hosting the Annual Long Run Retreat. I had not fully appreciated how much thought, effort and planning goes into organising and hosting an event like this and you and our in house team pulled it off beautifully well done to you all. The journey for all of us here on Borana has been extremely rewarding and we are very proud of our membership of the Long Run. There is lots more to do but I am hopeful that what we were able to share here was as inspiring for our membership as the new knowledge picked up and connections that we made.”

Michael Dyer, Managing Director, Borana.

“We have returned to Samara inspired, energised, and grateful that we are part of The Long Run family. We truly had no idea what a powerful collection of individuals and properties you are and what you have all individually and collectively achieved to protect wild spaces and people on the planet. Proud to share our journey with you and grateful to be part of yours.”

Sarah Tompkins, Co-Founder & Director, Fellow Member Samara Karoo Reserve (South Africa)

“It was so great to connect in person once again. The stimulating conversations and insights have once again inspired me to keep flying The Long Run flag high and work towards our shared goal of doing the right thing by people and nature.”

Sean Ingles, General Manager, GER® Member Grootbos Private Nature Reserve, South Africa

“Another fantastic meeting. Wonderful to reconnect and re-energise. These events get better every year and I always come away with new ideas and fresh thinking. Can’t wait to host it next year.”

Andrew Dixon, Co-founder, GER® Member Nikoi Island (Indonesia)
Thank you to all our members that participated this year. The power of The Long Run lies in its membership. Together we can do so much more than we can apart.