As Founder and Executive Director of the Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF) since 1990, Dr. Laurie Marker pioneered new ideas in cheetah conservation, and has formed cooperative alliances on behalf of the cheetah that had never before been possible. She is recognised as one of the world’s leading cheetah experts and began her in-situ research in Namibia in 1977. There she conducted ground-breaking research on the re-introduction of captive-born cheetahs into the wild. It was at this time that she learned about the conflict between livestock farmers and cheetahs.

Collaboration in 1982 with Smithsonian Institution researchers resulted in recognition of the limited genetic makeup of the cheetah. In 1990, Laurie founded her international non-profit organisation and set up its headquarters in Namibia in 1991. From humble beginnings in a tiny farmhouse in rural Namibia to an unparalleled conservation model for predator conservation, Laurie has built a world-renowned organisation.

In the early days, with no one to learn from or lean on, she broke new ground with every new programme and effort. She has contributed vital information on cheetah health, reproduction, mortality, evolution, and genetics from her biomedical work on every cheetah that passes through CCF’s hands (~900). This huge volume of data on wild cheetahs gathered over 25 years has proven invaluable in the management of both wild and captive cheetahs.

Laurie’s tireless work to unite a nation, a continent, and the world in the effort to save the cheetah is impressive. Through education and collaboration with local farmers and landowners, conservancies have been formed to provide thousands of contiguous acres of land where cheetahs can roam safely. Laurie chaired the Conservancy Association of Namibia (CANAM) and is the current Chairperson of the Large Carnivore Management Association of Namibia (LCMAN). She has learned that with improved livestock and wildlife management techniques, cheetahs, people and livestock can peacefully co-exist. Laurie has received many international awards for her work in cheetah conservation. In 2000 she was recognised as one of Time Magazine’s Heroes for the Planet and in 2008 was presented with the Gold Medal Award from the Society of Women Geographers. She also received the Conservation Medal of Lifetime Achievement Award from the Zoological Society of San Diego, was the Intel Environmental Prize Laureate of the 2008 Tech Award, a nominee for the 2008 and 2010 Indianapolis Prize, the 2009 Lifetime Achievement Award from the International Wildlife Film Festival, and the 2010 Tyler Prize for Environmental Achievement.

In 2002, Laurie completed her PhD in Zoology at the University of Oxford (UK). She has published over 60 scientific papers, and has been the subject of several hundred press articles. She is a core member and past vice-chair (1992 – 2001) of the World Conservation Union’s (IUCN) Species Survival Commission’s Cat Specialist Group, having joined in 1988. In 2014 she was appointed as an A.D. White Professor at Large at Cornell University in New York.

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The cheetah is fast becoming extinct. Join us in the fight for its survival.

Dr. Laurie Marker, CCF Founder and Executive Director
Laurie leads the effort to carry out CCF's mission and directs its activities. These include: bio-medical research to learn more about the health, disease reproduction and genetic make-up of the population; spatial, habitat and ecosystem research; wildlife and livestock management to reduce predator conflict; non-lethal predator control methods such as its Livestock Guarding Dog Programme, and extensive environmental education programmes throughout the country as well as at CCF’s Centre.

Laurie works internationally with scientists, government officials, businesses, and communities to raise awareness, develop policies and initiate business practices linking the economies of cheetah-range country landowners to international consumers and businesses. This successful model has now spread to other areas. Today, Laurie assists in developing cheetah conservation programmes in South Africa, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Algeria, Iran and India; as well as supporting a field research base in Kenya.

**SPECIAL AWARDS**

- 2009: Life Time Achievement Award – International Film Festival
- 2008: Society of Women Geographers - Gold Medal
- 2008: Zoological Society of San Diego – Lifetime Achievement Award
- 2009: Indiana Prize Finalist