

ZUNGWALA LOOP



GRADING: DIFFICULT

DISTANCE: 37.7 KM ESTIMATED DURATION: 5 HOURS

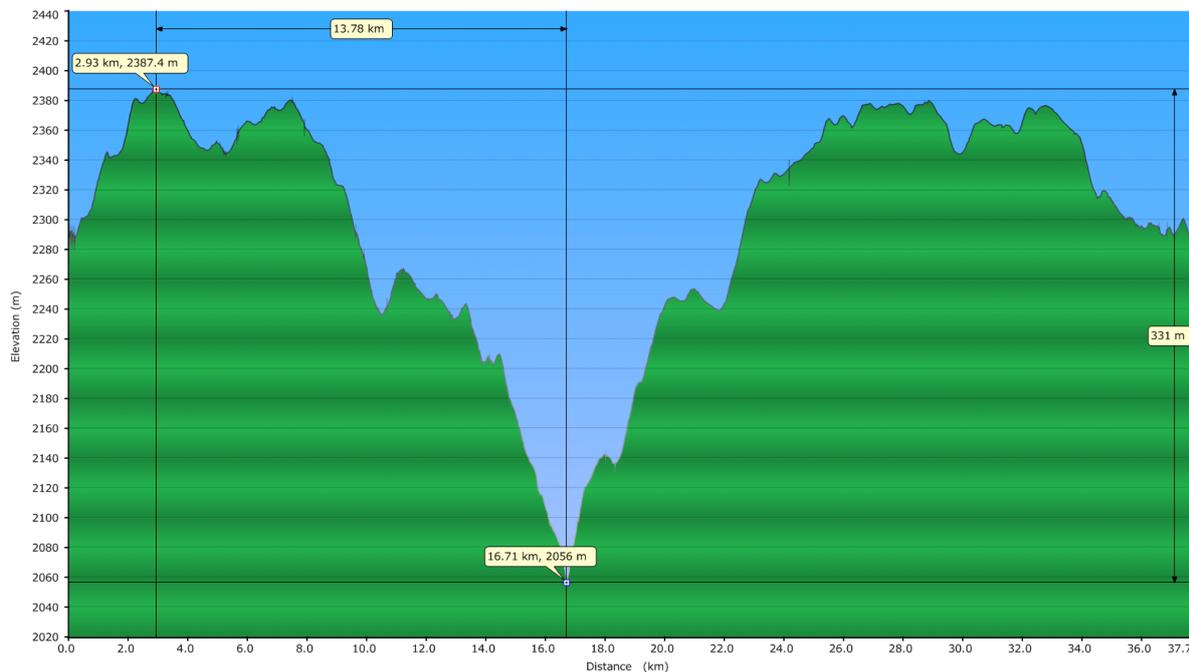
This loop is a tough ride which offers plenty downhill fun but just as much uphill battles. Either way you can't avoid climbing but if it's a challenge you are after then this is it. Things to be seen on this route include Lake Kaulime, views of a different dimension to the plateau and a variety of fauna and flora that the Nyika has to offer. You will be sure to see plenty general game, especially Common Duiker. Signs of porcupine, leopard and hyaena are all around. There are even signs of elephant moving from Jalawe in the north to the Chisanga Falls area further south. Another feature of this loop is the abundance of Protea flower species that can be seen.

This is also an area with a variety of indigenous forests and you can also see the beautiful hills in the lower valley between the border of Malawi and Zambia. The two eucalyptus forests are some of the trial plots which CDC planted before the Chelinda plantation. A walk around the bridge will reveal some remains of old buildings, a sight where the game department had a camp and an old village once stood. The water in this river is spring water and it runs all year round with a good flow.

Loop starting past the dam:

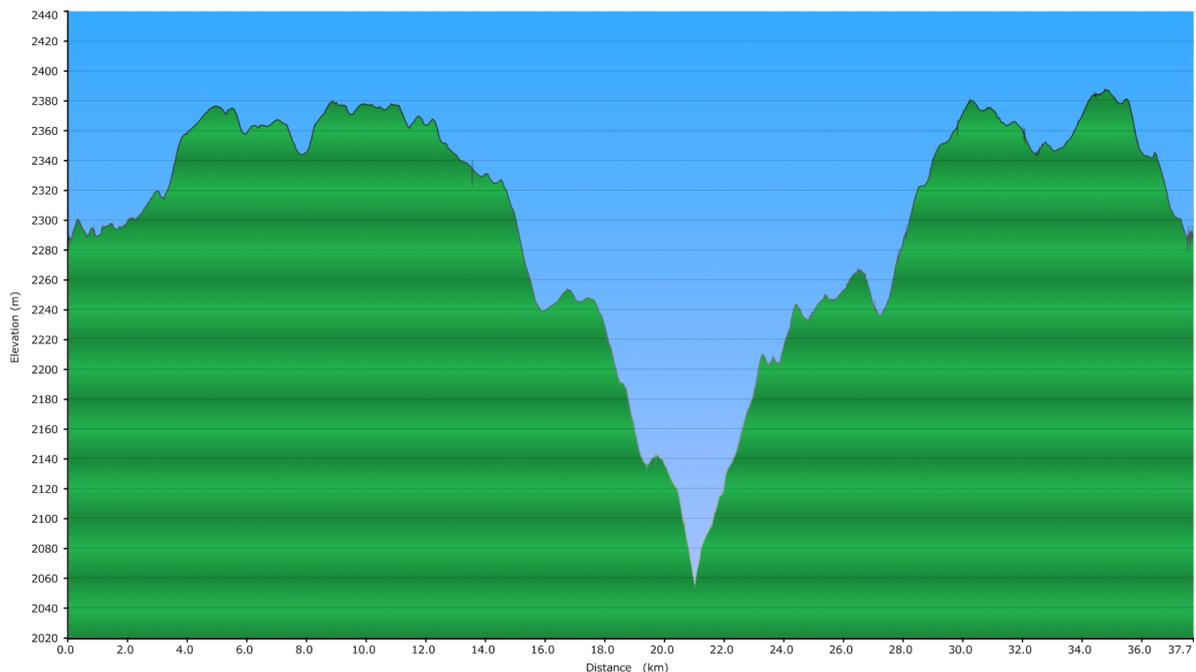
As you cycle away from camp you will turn right at the first sign post crossing the dam wall. On the other side continue past signpost 2 but turn left at sign post 3. The Nyika/Vwaza trust offices will be on your right. Once you've climbed the first hill you will pass the sign for the campsite and turn left at sign post 4. It's up another hill again but then it flattens out quite nicely. Make sure to keep left at sign post 5. This will take you away from the plantations and into the rolling hills. Notice on your left a bare patch of ground which is actually a salt lick which animals frequent to get their mineral supplements. Sign post 6 and 7 come in quick succession. Keep right at the former but turn right at the latter. Soon after turning right, sign post 8 points you to

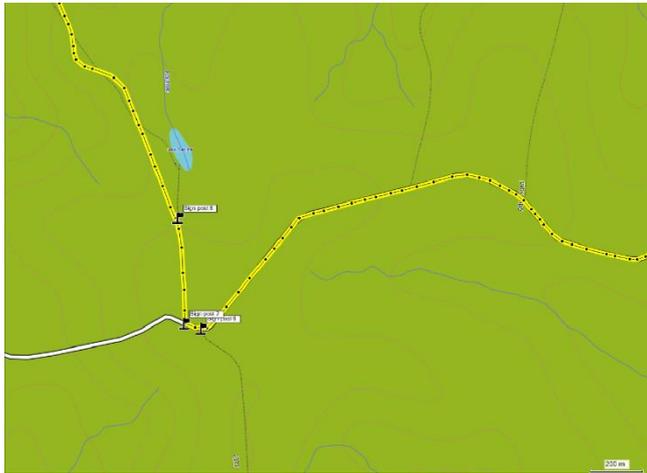
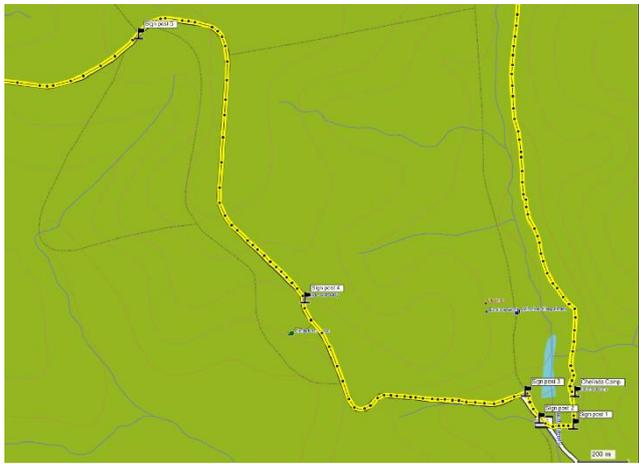
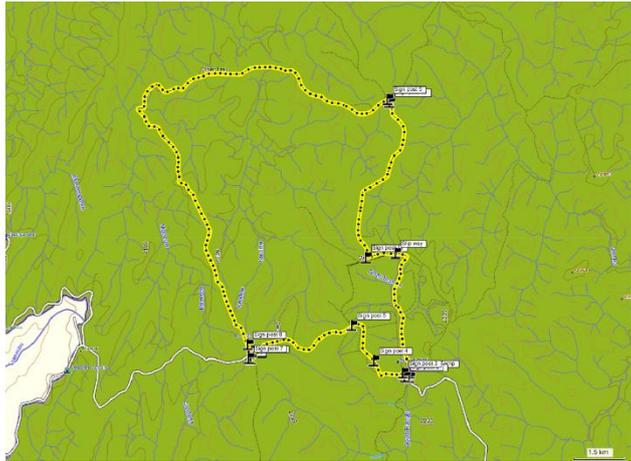
the first attraction. Take some time to cycle down to the Lake Kaulime and have a look around. When you get back to the main route you will be able to do a lot of freewheeling. You should see the trial plots of eucalyptus and have some great views. You'll be going downhill most of the way until you get to the bridge crossing the river. Take a break and walk around. Replenish your water resources if need be because the next part of the route is mostly uphill. Negotiating the rise from the valley floor is the tough part but take many breaks so as to admire the awesome views and Protea flowers which bloom generally from April to August. Eventually you'll get to sign post 9 where you'll turn right and right again at sign post 10. You will be seeing the plantation in front of you and know that you're almost home. When you reach sign post 11 the air strip will be in front of you and you'll take a left turn. Look out for the slip way off to your right soon after. This will be the short cut back to camp. You will be hugging the pine plantation to your left and the logging work will be on your right. End off by cycling past the chalets, drop off your bike at reception and head to the bar for a well deserved drink! If you're fit the 37.7km ride should take 3:30 hours but 5 hours is a more comfortable time frame in which to enjoy the ride and have a nice lunch break.



Loop starting through the plantation:

The route starts by cycling past the chalets and into the pine forest where you will follow the river that flows into Dam 1. Keep left at any junctions. This road will join the main road shortly before the air strip. Turn right at sign post 11 heading north-east. At sign post 10 and 9 turn left and enjoy the easy ride all the way down to the river. Remember to check out the views and try to find a Protea flower in bloom. Once at the river, take a break and fill up those water bottles as you'll be climbing most of the way to Lake Kaulime. The lake will provide a well deserved break before the last 8km stretch. At sign post 7 turn left and keep left at sign post 6. The pine plantations will now be in view. At sign post 5 keep right, and then enjoy the steep descent to the camp site area. Turn right at sign post 4 and take on the last major downhill towards camp. Be aware of some dodgy gullies across the road as you descend. At the Nyika/Vwaza Trust offices turn right then keep left at sign post 2. The ride to reception completes the 37.7km cycle.





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