

ARK*ive*

ABERDARES

A WATER TOWER THAT IS A VITAL NATIONAL ASSET



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ABERDARES FOREST
FIRES REPORT



HUMANS IN HARMONY WITH HABITAT & WILDLIFE



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RHINO ARK OBJECTIVES

Rhino Ark seeks solutions to the challenges facing the mountain forest ecosystems of Kenya, also known as the water towers. More specifically, Rhino Ark aims to:

- Protect Kenya's mountain forests, other threatened habitats and their rich biodiversity;
- Engage and educate adjacent communities in conservation;
- Secure the connectivity between mountain forests and other threatened wildlife habitats;
- Establish sustainable financing mechanisms for the conservation of mountain forests and other threatened wildlife habitats;
- Advocate nationally and internationally for the conservation of the mountain forests and other threatened habitats, their wildlife and their ecological functions; and,
- Use science to assess the impacts of, and review conservation interventions.



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S VIEW

CHRISTIAN LAMBRECHTS

The first half of 2022 has been marked by a steady recovery of Rhino Ark's financial situation and expansion of our programme of work. It has also been tinged with sadness at the loss of three legends in the conservation fraternity.

Charles Njonjo, one of our Patrons and an ardent conservationist, and Richard Leakey, a leading figure in the fight against wildlife crime and a great supporter of Rhino Ark's work, passed on at the start of the year. A few months later, Tony Fitzjohn, who established the first black rhino sanctuary in Tanzania, left us. Although they are dearly missed, they leave a legacy that has transformed wildlife conservation in East Africa.

Resumption of the acclaimed Rhino Charge event last year combined with pro-active fund-raising efforts have helped in re-establishing Rhino Ark's financial base. Presently, we have a wide range of local and internationally based organizations and foundations supporting our conservation programmes. They include Safaricom Foundation; Platinum Foundation; IFAD-Upper Tana Natural Resources Management Project; UNEP-African Elephant Fund; UNDP-Forest and Land Restoration Action for Kenya; EU-funded BIOPAMA; UK Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' Darwin Initiative; Tusk Trust (UK); Challenge Aid (UK); Rare Species Conservatory Foundation (USA); Wildlife Conservation Society (USA); Elephant Cooperation (USA); Fresno Chaffee Zoo (USA); IDH-ISLA (Netherlands); and Calgary Zoological Foundation (Canada).

Rhino Charge funds and donor support have enabled us to maintain our legacy projects, support forest-adjacent communities, and expand our conservation programmes. Our community-based patrols have been extended to Ragati Forest (Mt. Kenya) and Mau Eburu. We are actively involved in preparation works for a future translocation of the critically endangered mountain bongo antelope to Ragati and Eburu forests. In Mt. Kenya, we have recently completed two road elephant grids in Imenti Forest and are preparing for the construction of a wildlife underpass on the Nanyuki-Meru highway. These interventions complement the 240km of electric fence built, and together contribute towards resolving human-wildlife conflict. We have also secured initial funding to start the construction of the electric fence around Kakamega forest this year.

To advise on and support our work, we have expanded the Rhino Ark Kenya Board with the appointment of Crista Cullen, Mariam Abdullahi and Patrick Avery. The three are skilled, passionate professionals from the younger generation. Concurrently, Rhino Ark USA, our sister organization, have expanded their board with the addition of two new trustees, Dr. Paul Reillo and Mark Somen, to accelerate the pitching of our story and achievements in the USA. We are also working towards strengthening our Rhino Ark UK board.

MAU EBURU ECOSYSTEM

EBURU SCHOOLS CONSERVATION EDUCATION PROGRAMME ANNUAL CURRICULUM REVIEW WORKSHOP HELD



Rhino Ark's Outreach Officer, Peter Munene, facilitates the Eburu Workshop

The Schools Conservation Education Programme is a key element of our community outreach portfolio.

In January 2022, the Rhino Ark Eburu Schools Conservation Education Programme Committee held its annual curriculum review workshop to take stock of the programme, assess the impact of Covid-19 and the National Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) system in schools.

Members observed that the programme was proving to be highly beneficial to both pupils and teachers. It complements the CBC system by providing practical tools and supplementary knowledge that enhanced the learning experience across diverse subjects.

The standing Curriculum Implementation Committee comprising teachers, community conservation champions, officers from the Ministry of Education, Kenya Wildlife Service, Kenya Forest Service and Rhino Ark oversees the implementation of the programme.

During the workshop's plenary discussion, Harun Kamau from the Ministry of Education's Quality Assurance Department acknowledged the value added by the programme and reiterated his department's full support.

EBURU COMMUNITY FOREST ASSOCIATION OFFICE OPENED

The Eburu Community Forest Association (ECoFA) opened its office at the Eburu Forest Station. The event that was attended by the Kenya Forest Service forester, CFA Chairman and the members took place in November 2021 during the annual general meeting.

The Association has hired a local receptionist to manage the office, welcome visitors to the forest, and link hikers with community guides.

Thanks to the Rhino Ark / Calgary Zoo Mountain Forest Partnership, efforts like

these ensure that community members benefit directly from the conservation of our mountain forests.



Official opening of Eburu Community Forest Association Office



ECoFA office receptionist Peninah (R) with forest manager

EMPOWERING COMMUNITY CONSERVATION CHAMPIONS

Rhino Ark supports the Community Conservation Champions Programme in Eburu by offering regular trainings to build strong ties to forest conservation. 2021 finished with our 16 champions creating mini group projects aimed at designing conservation actions in their home communities.

The winning group received a mini grant for KES 75,000 to implement their idea. In 2022 we returned with a second Community Conservation Champion mini grant writing training course, with the winning proposal again receiving a mini conservation grant to implement at home.

We look forward to seeing the results of their efforts soon. In addition to the training courses, this group of enthusiastic naturalists participate in monthly bird watching and medicinal plant identification training days. All received binoculars to aid in bird spotting.



The conservation champions receiving their First Aid and Fire Safety certificates



The conservation champions using their binoculars

COMMUNITY FOREST ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

In 2021, Rhino Ark/Calgary Zoo funded a financial training capacity building exercise for all zonal Community Forest Association (CFA) treasurers and initiated a membership drive.

In support of forest/ community engagement, the recruitment drive has yielded 681 members; 458 men, 223 women and 20 forest user groups who were all issued with membership ID cards.

The CFA system is the only legally recognized way for local communities to engage with Kenya's protected forests.

The Eburu Forest Community Forest Association (ECOFA) membership registration exercise is funded and supported by the Rhino Ark/Calgary Zoo Mountain Forest Conservation Partnership.



Eburu CFA members receiving ID cards

KAHUHO SECONDARY SCHOOL GETS TREE NURSERY

Kahuho Secondary, a modern mixed boarding school was in late 2021 the recipient of a model tree nursery built by Rhino Ark. The school is located in Kiambogo location, to the north of Eburu Forest. The fully-kitted tree nursery will enable pupils to gain practical skills in agroforestry. It will also provide an alternative income stream to the school through the sale of both indigenous and exotic tree seedlings.

The pupils' efforts have seen the sown tree seed species take root, with environment club members being at the forefront of this initiative. In a recent school visit by Rhino Ark, pupils expressed their enthusiasm for the programme. They also expressed their appreciation for a field trip to Eburu forest in late November 2021, in which 55 pupils from the environment club had a chance to experience the forest and interact with conservationists.

They also visited the Kengen plant, natural sauna, had lectures on the endangered mountain bongo, took a walk along the Eastern Summit to Kimororoch junction and finally enjoyed a taste of pure natural honey, experiencing the Ogiek community's expert harvesting. This visit, which greatly inspired the pupils, has awakened in them a fire to be more involved in conservation efforts.



Kahuho Secondary School pupils during the visit to Eburu forest



Tree seedlings that are ready for planting



A student holds up a seedling

BEE KEEPERS RECEIVE TRAINING FROM EXPERTS

Rhino Ark with support from The Calgary Zoo facilitates bee-keeping training programmes to help forest adjacent communities improve their livelihoods. In December 2021, honey experts from The National Beekeeping Institute visited Eburu Forest Beekeepers Cooperative members to inspect and provide technical advice based on previous trainings.

The experts went to each of the 4 locations surrounding the forest, where we have 21 beekeeping groups and over 30 individuals, and brought hands on improvements and suggestions to our members, who were more than thrilled with the golden opportunity.

The Eburu Natural Forest Honey Cooperative members have now been trained on how to better manage bees and establish bee hives in a way to keep out honey badgers. Honeybees as pollinators, have an essential role in maintaining Kenya's mountain ecosystems.



Beekeepers using smokers to calm bees during training



Honey expert inspecting a traditional beehive



Beekeepers harvesting honey during the training session

EBURU FOREST IMPACTED BY WILDFIRE

The hot and dry season early this year created conditions for forest fires in Eburu forest. In January, a bush fire broke out and swept through a section deep in the forest around Ole Sirwa. Initial efforts to fight the fire by the Kenya Forest Service (KFS) team were hampered by logistical challenges, and the fire burnt overnight. By the second day Rhino Ark was able to deploy the fence maintenance operations vehicle to support the firefighting operations.

A 17-man team comprising forest and wildlife rangers, fence maintenance staff and community members worked tirelessly for hours to subdue and ultimately extinguish the fire. An estimated 20 hectares (49.2 acres) of a forest section dominated by leleshwa woodland was impacted by the fire.

In the weeks thereafter, over 500 hectares of Eburu Forest were ravaged by fires but they were all put under control. This is thanks to huge efforts from the local community, including Green Park, Loldia and members of the Community Forest Association (CFA).

Rhino Ark have been instrumental in providing water and driving it to the fire sites, with women from the CFA carrying it through the bush in buckets to the firefighters. The effort of the community in volunteering their time to help in protecting the forest reflects the spirit of partnership and is particularly appreciated.



The wildfire in Eburu forest



A section of the destroyed forest



Joint effort to save Eburu from wildfire

MAU EBURU LANDSCAPES AND BIODIVERSITY



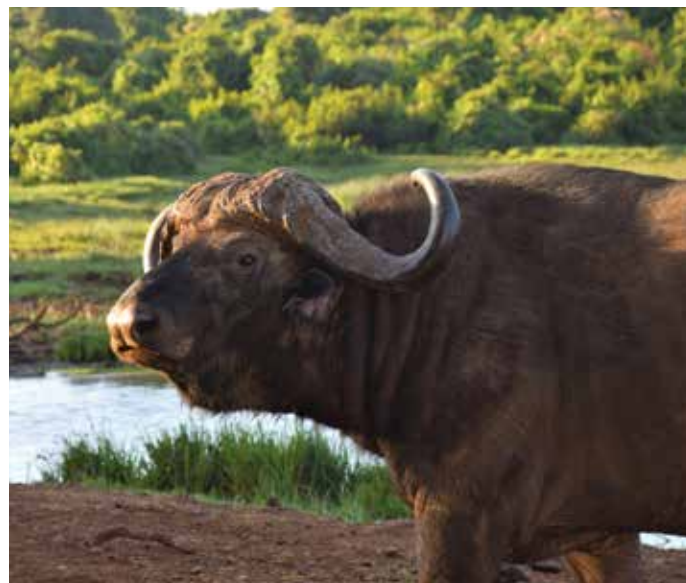
White Headed Wood Hoopoes



Podo Tree



Deep forest



Buffalo



Leopard



Mould on trees



Giant Forest Hog

SOUTH WESTERN MAU ECOSYSTEM

PLATCORP FOUNDATION DONATES KES 5.5 MILLION TO RESTORE SOUTH WESTERN MAU

Mr. James Watson, Human Resource Director at Platcorp Holdings Ltd and Ignatius Obara, Trustee at Platcorp Foundation hand over a cheque of Ksh 5.5M to Eric Kihui, Mau Landscape Coordinator and Resource Development Manager at Rhino Ark.

This initiative is part of a broader effort by various organisations to restore the expansive South Western Mau Forest Reserve that long suffered the ravages of illegal human activity.

With funding support from Platcorp Foundation, Rhino Ark is partnering with the Kenya Forest Service and the local community to restore 40 hectares of heavily degraded forest.

The site is located along the eastern boundary of the South Western Mau Forest, which also marks the border of Nakuru and Bomet Counties.

This comprehensive system will include micro fencing and posting of community scouts to protect the fragile indigenous seedling to ensure that they survive.



Platcorp cheque handover at Rhino Ark HQ

The Tirigoi site, alongside the 10-hectare Kapkembu site established in 2021, continues the partnership between Rhino Ark and Platinum Credit.

REHABILITATION IN SOUTH WESTERN MAU TIRIGOI SITE BEGINS

Wednesday 11 May marked the start of the Tirigoi site forest rehabilitation programme. With funding support from Platinum Credit, Rhino Ark is partnering with Kenya Forest Service and the local community to restore 40 hectares of heavily degraded forest. The site is located along the eastern boundary of the South Western Mau Forest which also marks the border of Nakuru and Bomet Counties.

44,000 seedlings will be planted and cared for over a 3-year intensive maintenance period. This comprehensive system will include micro fencing and posting of community scouts to protect the fragile indigenous seedling to ensure that they survive. The Tirigoi site, alongside the 10 hectare Kapkembu site established in 2021, continues the partnership between Rhino Ark and Platinum Credit.

This initiative is part of a broader effort by various organisations to restore the expansive South Western Mau Forest Reserve that long suffered the ravages of illegal human activity.



Clearing the Tirigoi site



Youth taking part in the rehabilitation programme



Building a tree nursery shade

FOREST - AERIAL SURVEILLANCE



Aerial surveillance team

In December 2021, Rhino Ark organized a surveillance flight over South Western Mau forest. The team comprised members drawn from Rhino Ark, Kenya Forest Service, The Judiciary and The Kenya Police Service.

The observations made by team members on illegal activities in the forest were captured using GPS. The site (exact coordinates using GPS) and qualitative and quantitative data are captured live during the flight.

In the post flight debrief meeting of key stakeholders, necessary follow up actions were agreed upon. The flights, coordinated by Rhino Ark, are an invaluable tool for enhancing forest protection. The forest conservation efforts of stakeholders are contributing greatly to the regeneration of the forest.

SEASONAL MAINTENANCE OF KAPKEMBU FOREST REHABILITATION SITE

Seasonal maintenance including spot weeding and bush clearing of Kapkembu forest rehabilitation site in South Western Mau forest is now complete. Without an adequate weeding regime trees can suffer poor growth rates and in some cases die. Replacing recently planted bare root trees can be costly and is potentially avoidable.

16,000 tree seedlings planted on the 10 hectare Kapkembu forest rehabilitation site in South Western Mau forest are flourishing under a careful maintenance regime. The replant site, located near Kapkembu forest outpost is supported by Platinum Credit Ltd.



Community conducting seasonal rehabilitated site maintenance



Rhino Ark Outreach Officer demonstrates how to maintain the replant site

TREE PLANTING CAMPAIGN INITIATIVE

The Rhino Ark has launched the Rhino Ark Tree Planting Campaign, targeting 80,000 trees monthly over the next three years to restore Kenya's once pristine mountain forest ecosystems.

The Tree Planting Campaign officially kicked off in the South Western Mau Forest Reserve which is part of the expansive Mau Forest Complex.

The campaign provides the opportunity for local communities and people around the world to partner together to raise funds to carry out replanting of indigenous trees in forest areas most in need of rehabilitation.

"We are excited about the new tree planting campaign and thrilled by the enthusiasm from our supporters in working to get this huge project underway," says Christian Lambrechts, Rhino Ark's Executive Director. "While there are a number of initiatives out there, it is not easy to directly do tree planting unless you own land on which to plant.

Our initiative is a bridge that provides a way for individuals to really make a difference. We give thanks to those that have already donated funds to Rhino Ark and those who will be contributing to this new initiative as they are vital to ensuring the continuation of the invaluable projects Rhino Ark carries out."



SOUTH-WESTERN MAU LANDSCAPES AND BIODIVERSITY



Honeycomb of ground dwelling bee species



A water springs at Tirigoi forest



Garman's toad



Tirigoi River



Bird's nest



Von hornel's chameleon



A wild flower



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MT KENYA ECOSYSTEM

A 60KM SOLAR ELECTRIC FENCE LAUNCHED AT KABARU FOREST STATION

A 60km Mt. Kenya solar electric fence was launched on 19th, November 2021 in Nyeri County at Kabaru Forest Station.

The event was attended by Cabinet Secretary for Water, Sanitation and Irrigation, Hon. Sicily K. Kariuki (EGH), Rhino Ark, the Upper Tana Natural Resources Management project (UTaNRMP), Kenya Forest Service, Kenya Wildlife Service, and Mount Kenya Trust.

Guests planted trees to commemorate the 60km Mt. Kenya solar electric fence, launched today in Nyeri County at Kabaru Forest Station.

The project is a Water Tower and biodiversity conservation initiative being implemented within the framework of a public/private partnership between the Upper Tana Catchment Natural Resources Management

Project, Kenya Wildlife Service, Kenya Forest Service, Rhino Ark Kenya Charitable Trust and Mount Kenya Trust.

The activity is a continuation of the Mt. Kenya electric fence programme under which 220 kilometres of fence have already been built with support from various stakeholders.



CS, Sicily Kariuki straining the fence



Guests planted trees to commemorate the solar electric fence

RHINO ARK TRAINING FIREFIGHTERS IN 8 MT. KENYA FOREST STATIONS

Rhino Ark is supporting the training of 20 rangers / community scouts on firefighting in eight Forest Stations on Mt. Kenya. Two two-day training given in each stations covers theory, firefighting equipment and their use to tackle fires effectively. The aim of the exercise is to provide basic training of at least 20 firefighters in each forest station. Forest station selected are high-risk forest fire stations and were jointly identified by Rhino Ark and the Mount KenyaTrust together with the Kenya Forest Service and Kenya Wildlife Service.

The timing of the training is meant to equip the firefighters in readiness for the next fire season. Forest stations targeted included; Nanyuki, Ontulili, Marania, Muccheene, Meru, Ruthumbi, Chogoria, Narumoru, and Gathiuru.



Attentive rangers during training



A Firefighter from Mt Kenya Trust conducts the training

UGANDA WILDLIFE AUTHORITY VISIT MT KENYA

Rhino Ark Kenya played hosted a delegation from the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) and Space for Giants, who were on a benchmarking trip to Kenya. The delegation visited Rhino Ark's projects at Imenti Forest Reserve, Mt. Kenya, and had a chance to visit the following sites:

- Kithoka and Ruiri Elephant Grids;
- Kamutune and Kamitongu One-Way Automatic Elephant Gate;
- Use of plastic posts made from recycled plastic waste;

- Proposed Wildlife Underpass along Meru-Nanyuki Highway;
- Elephant Underpass at Subuiga at Meru-Isiolo Junction courtesy of our partner Mount Kenya Trust.

"We learnt a lot from Rhino Ark, and appreciate all the innovations utilized to mitigate Human Wildlife Conflict. When we get back to Uganda we shall share with our colleagues in the Uganda Wildlife Authority and other stakeholders, and duplicate the same interventions." *Team Leader – David Lubwama, Warden, Civil Engineer, Queen Elizabeth Conservation Area.*



Team from Uganda Wildlife Authority at Kithoka elephant grid



Team from Uganda Wildlife Authority at the Mt Kenya wildlife underpass

REGULAR FENCE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING CONDUCTED



Fence Technical Committee

The Rhino Ark Executive Director Christian Lambrechts meets with the Fence Technical Committee, comprising of Rhino Ark, Kenya Forest Service, Kenya Wildlife Service, the National Administration and Community Forest Associations.

For a clear understanding of the requirements needed to make projects successful, the committee meets on site, where the project is being undertaken.

RHINO ARK DONATES A MOTORCYCLE TO ENHANCE FENCE OPERATIONS

The Kenya Wildlife Service Meru Station received a new motorcycle from Rhino Ark, under the UNEP - African Elephant Fund, to strengthen the supervision of the Imenti Fence maintenance.

The motorcycle will be used by the Fence Supervisor to inspect maintenance works done by the 20 Fence Attendants maintaining the Imenti Fence line on a daily basis.

The model of fence supervision using a motorcycle was piloted in Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the Mt. Kenya Fence and has proved to be very effective. Previously the Fence Supervisor depended on public means of transport or KWS sector warden vehicle. With the motorcycle the Fence Supervisor can independently run his programme thanks to the UNEP - African Elephant Fund.



Kenya Wildlife Service Meru Station Officer receives a brand new motorcycle from Rhino Ark

GIVEPOWER DONATES SOLAR SYSTEM TO RHINO ARK

Mr. Barrett Raftery, VP of Impact Projects at GivePower - visited the Imenti Fenceline in Mt. Kenya.

The aim of the visit was to assess the status of the solar power system adopted by Rhino Ark to power the fence energizers along the Mt. Kenya Fence.

During the visits at Themba and Kithoka Energizer Stations, the Engineers identified specifications that need to be improved to make

our solar system more robust and able to power the fence line all the year round.

The Engineers are exploring the possibility of implementing a Remote Power Monitoring System to enable management to monitor the fence 24/7.

Givepower is a charitable organization that supports local communities by providing sustainable solar energy system.



Adam Mwangi, Mr. Barrett Raftery and the team pose at the Mt Kenya short fence



Mr. Barrett Raftery inspects the fence

INSPECTING ELEPHANT GRIDS

Rhino Ark and the Kenya Wildlife Service inspected the two elephant grids that were constructed last year with support from Wildlife Conservation Society and Elephant Cooperation. The grids located at Kithoka and Ruiri have prevented elephants from using the road to exit the forest.

During the inspection, all aspects of the grids were examined. Despite the heavy loads on the road that connects Isiolo and Meru towns, the grids have been effective. The inspection team also discussed some upgrades to be implemented.



Team inspecting Kithoka wildlife grid

MAWINGU MOUNTAIN BONGO SANCTUARY LAUNCH

Rhino Ark joined our conservation partners at the Mount Kenya Wildlife Conservancy (MKWC) to officially launch the 776 acres Mawingu Mountain Bongo Sanctuary at the Mt. Kenya Wildlife Conservancy.

The MKWC secured a special license from the Kenya Forest Service (KFS) for the forest sanctuary to be established. Five bongo from the MKWC orphanage were released today to start their new and semi-wild lives.

It was a monumental day for Mountain Bongo conservation in Kenya and Rhino Ark is proud to be a partner in the national bongo recovery conversation.



Mawingu Bongo sanctuary plaque



CS, Najib Balala and other dignitaries at the launch

CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATION TRAINING FOR FOREST PERSONNEL

Rhino Ark is taking a bold stand against Wildlife Crime through improved enforcement action including; training and equipping forest security teams with the right materials, knowledge and skills to counter wildlife criminals.

According to the Office of Director of Public Prosecution, conviction rate for wildlife crimes in Kenya has risen to 91 percent from 44 percent in 2013. This is a significant achievement in the war against poaching for government agencies and other conservation organizations'.

Between 16th and 23rd March 2022, Rhino Ark in partnership with Calgary Zoo organized two 3-day courses for teams from both Mt. Kenya and Aberdares ecosystems.

Fifty forest security personnel from Rhino Ark, CalagaryZoo/Wilder Institute, Kenya Wildlife Service, Kenya Forest

Service, Ragati River Management, Bongo Surveillance Project, and Mount Kenya Trust attended the Crime Scene Investigation training.

The training was conducted by instructors from US based, SMA Consulting LLC, led by Salvatore Amato; a renowned expert

with 30 years in the field of wildlife law enforcement experience. It was designed to take participants through classroom, field and simulation.

This will ensure the judicial process; from investigation, prosecution to adjudication of wildlife cases is successfully handled.



Participants at the meeting



Crime Scene Investigation Training in progress

SENSITIZING COMMUNITIES ON CONSERVATION

Sensitizing communities on forest conservation is a great tool in achieving organizations mandate. It forms the entry base and focal point where communities and organizations can jointly work in together.

Conducting regular sensitization programmes has been the back-bone of Rhino Ark's success especially when launching a new project.

Rhino Ark held a series of meetings with Chehe Community Forest Association and scouts to build on a joint forest collaboration to conserve the Chehe forest. Forest adjacent communities prove to be conversant with the forest and as such, collaborating with them is beneficial in achieving conservation assignments.



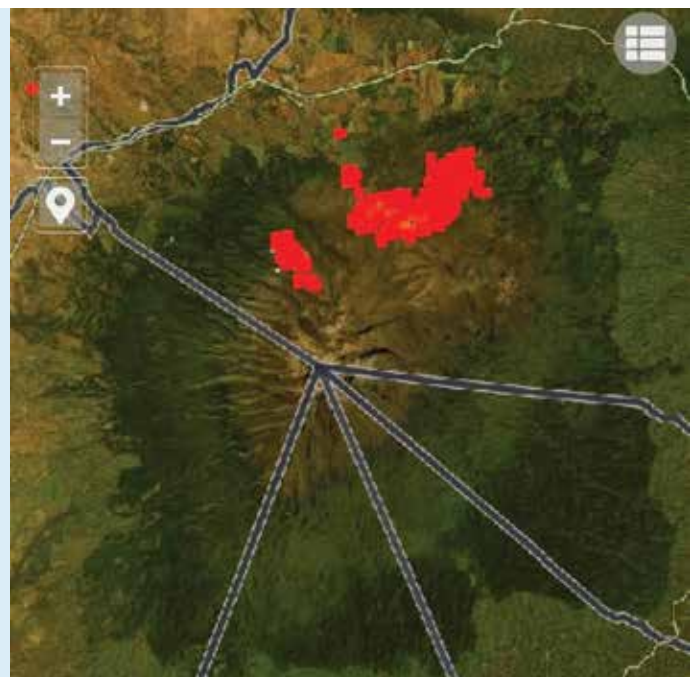
Sensitization meeting in progress

MT. KENYA FOREST FIRE UPDATE

Between 13th - 23rd March 2022 Rhino Ark carried out recce flights to assist the planning of the firefighting operations on both Aberdares and Mt. Kenya ecosystems.

Additionally, Rhino Ark airlifted firefighters to the remote moorlands of the Aberdares to extinguish the wildfires.

Teams airlifted included rangers from the Kenya Forest Service and Kenya Wildlife Service as well as the Aberdare Joint Surveillance Unit; a well-equipped and trained team of community members supported by Rhino Ark.



Satellite image of the wildfires from March 13th - 23rd 2022



Mt Kenya Fireline

MT KENYA LANDSCAPES AND BIODIVERSITY



White tailed Mongoose



Ragati River



Buffaloes



Waterbuck



Deep Forest



Hyenas



Lichens



Elephants

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ABERDARES ECOSYSTEM

SCHOOL OF HOPE END YEAR RESOLUTIONS

In December 2021, supervisors of the Mt. Kenya School of Hope (SOH) converged at Rhino Ark offices for the end of year meeting to review the programme.

Rhino Ark has partnered with Challenge Aid, a UK based charitable trust, to support selected schools around Aberdare/Mt. Kenya Landscape in establishing school library, support extra curriculum activities and health programme especially through provision of sanitary towels.

The objective of the meeting was to enable the implementer's of SOH projects to take stock of what has been achieved in the year 2021 and develop plans for the year 2022.

"Pupils who have been consistent in using the SOH library have recorded outstanding performance in the national exams. For example one of my pupils passed exams with flying colours in the last Kenya Primary Certificate Examination enabling the them to be admitted to one of the prestigious national schools and also awarded a full scholarship for the four years," reported Mr. Muchemi, the SOH supervisor at Tetu Boys Primary school.



Supervisors of the Mt. Kenya School of Hope
end of year meeting



ABERDARES FOREST FIRES REPORT

Aberdare Forest Fire

In February 2022, a fire broke out in the scenic moorlands of the Northern Aberdares and it was successfully extinguished. The fire destroyed over 700 hectares of moorlands vegetation, including erica bushland, within the Aberdare National Park and adjacent Forest Reserve. At least five distinct fires were initially observed, strongly suggesting criminal activity as the source.

The prevailing dry conditions and powerful winds were major contributors to the fire's rapid spread, which was further compounded by the multiple points started by suspected arsonists.

Despite immense odds, the fire was brought under control in less than two days. Recent investment in building the capacity of Rhino Ark, Mount Kenya Trust, Kenya Forest Service and Kenya Wildlife Service firefighters in terms of equipment and training truly paid off. The excellent collaboration between the concerned government agencies and conservation organizations, together with

the local communities, made it possible to speedily mobilize available resources. The twice daily aerial reconnaissance flights carried out by Rhino Ark were instrumental in prioritizing and GPS marking the fire lines. This enabled precise helicopter drops of trained and equipped firefighters in the hotspot areas at dawn, ensuring that the best personnel available were at the right location when the early morning weather conditions were ideal for effectively battling the fire.

A big thank you to our conservation partners, in particular Kenya Forest Service, Kenya Wildlife Service and the Mount Kenya Trust for their immense support. Many thanks to Tropic Air for providing aerial support (aerial recce and airdrop of personnel), and the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust for covering the cost of the helicopter-based airdrop. We are also very grateful for the financial support received from many Kenyans who responded to our appeal. Without this timely intervention, a great deal more of the moorland would have been lost to the fire.

IMPACT OF OUR FENCES

Electrified, game-proof fences offer practical and effective solutions to the dual challenge of protecting wildlife and forests from destruction on one hand, and keeping the adjacent highly productive farmland safe from marauding wildlife on the other.

These fences are a cost effective way to safely control Wildlife Movement when compared to other alternatives. To maintain our electric fences, Rhino Ark has 157 fence attendants working full time.



Fence attendant



Fence attendants

IUCN - RHINO ARK SIGN €49,693 (KES 6.25M) GRANT

Rhino Ark's Executive Director Christian Lambrechts has signed an agreement with IUCN for a grant of €49,693 (KES 6.25M) under the EU-funded BIOPAMA Rapid Response Grant.

The activities covered under the one year agreement includes;

- The maintenance of the Aberdare Electric Fence,
- Support to the Aberdare Joint Surveillance Unit (AJSU) to strengthen security in the Aberdare,
- Organization of the Aberdare Fence Relay Run that will involve 100 schools, among others

THE ABERDARES JOINT SURVEILLANCE UNIT DESTROYS MARIJUANA

The Aberdare Joint Surveillance Unit destroyed illegal plants during their operations in Gakanga Forest, in the Aberdares.

Cannabis plant farmers cause bushfires when clearing areas to plant marijuana, threatening adjacent forest and moorland areas.

The recent fires in the moorlands of Northern Aberdares reported in early February destroyed over 700 hectares of moorlands vegetation, including Erica bushland, within the Aberdare National Park and adjacent Forest Reserve. At least five distinct fires were initially observed, strongly suggesting criminal activity as the source.

The prevailing dry conditions and powerful winds were major contributors to the fire's rapid spread, which was further compounded by the multiple points started by suspected arsonists.



AJSU Team during surveillance



Marijuana plant

SCHOOLS OF HOPE BENEFIT FROM COUNTY SCHOLARSHIP

Rhino Ark has partnered with Challenge Aid, a UK based charitable trust, to support selected schools around the Aberdares/Mt. Kenya region.

Joy Wanjiru, a product of the School of Hope (SOH) Programme is pictured together with Hon. Mutahi Kahiga, Governor of Nyeri County at the award ceremony of the County Education Scholarships. Joy was elated to secure an admission to Bishop Gatimu Ngandu Girls School, a national school, through the programme.



Governor Mutahi during the Nyeri Schools Awards Ceremony

ABERDARES LANDSCAPES AND BIODIVERSITY



Helichrysum Flower



Moth



Aberdares forest cover



Buffaloes



Zebra



Stick Insect



Sykes Monkey



Magura waterfalls



Twin Peaks

RHINO ARK NEWS

Tributes

HON. CHARLES NJONJO

Hon. Charles Njonjo was a Patron of Rhino Ark and an ardent conservationist. He was appointed Chairman of Kenya Wildlife Service board in 1998. During his tenure, his contribution to Kenya's conservation sector was immense.

Remarkably he died a few weeks short of reaching the age of 102.



DR. RICHARD LEAKEY

Dr. Richard Leakey achieved international recognition as a paleontologist at a very young age. But it was his work in conservation that Kenyans may remember him best. Appointed as the first Director of the Kenya Wildlife Service in the 1980s, he inspired and led a team which unquestionably turned the tide against organized poaching and saved the crucial tourism industry for the country. He publicly supported the work of Rhino Ark and was more recently involved in the negotiations that led to the change of the conservation status of Mount Kenya's forests into a National Reserve.



ANNA SAPIEHA WODZICKI

Anna Sapieha Wodzicki - known to many as Anula - passed away on May 18th. She was a woman inspired by the world, and always at home in Africa.

Anula was a dedicated Rhino Charger along with her sisters Teresa Sapieha and Maryjka in Team Wacus- Car 47 popularly known as the Girls in Pearls. They have maneuvered through many Rhino Charges in their 1956 unmodified land rover following Stach Sapieha's footsteps.

Fare thee well Anula. You will be dearly missed.

WILDLIFE PROTECTION

Poorly planned human activity in wildlife rich areas results in habitat fragmentation. Inevitably, wildlife bears the consequences of this. Busy roads that run through wildlife migratory corridors result in death and serious injuries to multiple species.

Most recently, a black-backed jackal was killed by a speeding vehicle along the Moi - North Lake Road. The road bisects the Eburu Forest - Lake Naivasha wildlife corridor.

Rhino Ark is spearheading efforts towards mobilizing resources to build a wildlife overpass. The overpass will provide a solution to the tragic problem of frequent wildlife roadkills caused by the busy traffic along this road.



PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE FOREST CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT ACT, 2016

Rhino Ark is deeply concerned by the proposed amendment to the Forest Conservation and Management Act 2016. This amendment would take away the authority of Kenya Forest Service to review and sanction any proposed public forest boundary alteration, in particular excision.

The current Forest Act and its Section 34(2A) was drafted in response to arbitrary excisions that led to wanton destruction of forests in the 1990s and early 2000s. Section 34(2A) requests that any proposed public forest boundary alteration or excision be



first sanctioned by the Board of the Kenya Forest Service before being submitted to the National Assembly for endorsement.

The repeal of Section 34(2A) will be a major setback in the protection of our public forests

and will open avenues for the grabbing of public forest land. It will inevitably lead to the loss of forests and their diverse wildlife. It will also lead to the destruction of critical water catchment areas that provide vital ecological services securing environmental stability, and supporting our well-being and economic development. Considering what Kenya has lost in the past, any change that weakens, rather than strengthens the mechanisms to protect our forests, is ill-advised.

We stand with other Kenyans in calling for a rejection of this proposed amendment.





SUPPORT RHINO ARK'S CONSERVATION WORK BY ADVERTISING WITH US

ADVERTISEMENT RATES:

	MAY EDITION	NOVEMBER EDITION
Back Cover page A4	60,000/-	65,000/-
Front Inner Cover Page A4	55,000/-	60,000/-
Inner pages A4	50,000/-	55,000/-
Half page A5	35,000/-	45,000/-

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2136010/11
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2022 RHINO CHARGE ENTRANTS



TOP 10 RHINO CHARGE FUNDRAISERS



Over 168 million shillings
McKittrick/Ray/Jessop/Bovard/Knight/Smith
(1989-2021) Car 5



Over 129 million shillings
Peter Kinyua/John Macharia
(2000-2021) Car 23



Over 81 million shillings
Adil Khawaja's AK44 Team
(2005-2021) Car 44



Over 70 million Kenya Shillings
Stanley Kinyanjui's Magnate Chargers Team
(2007-2021) Car 62



Over 65 million shillings
Mark Tilbury's Hog Charge Team
(1999-2021) Car 35



Over 45 million shillings
The Avery's Bundufundis Team
(1996-2021) Car 38



Over 39 million shillings
Mike & Sarah Higgins
(1990-2008) Car 22



Over 38 million shillings
Tim Carstens' Aussie Rules Team
(2013-2019) Car 63



Over 31 million shillings
Mark Glen/Bryn Llewellyn's Team 48
(2005-2021) Car 48



Over 32 million shillings
Eddy Verbeek's Rhino Charge Car No 1
(2000-2021) Car 1

ABOUT THE RHINO CHARGE

The Rhino Charge is an annual off-road 4x4 competition held in Kenya in which entrants are required to visit 13 points (guard posts) scattered over approximately 100 km² of rough terrain within a 10 hour period. Entrants are supplied with a 1:50,000 scale map of the venue, co-ordinates of the 13 guard posts and their start position the night before the event. Each competitor must plot the guard posts on the map and decide his/her route. The winner is the competitor who visits the most guard posts in the shortest distance (GPS measured).

The event is organised in order to raise funds to support the activities of the Rhino Ark Kenya Charitable Trust, an NGO which works towards a noble cause: the conservation and protections of Kenya's mountain range ecosystems, the so-called "Water Towers".

How Can You Support the Rhino Charge

ATTEND AS A SPECTATOR

Attending the Charge as a Spectator is an amazing way that you can support the event and be part of all the action!

SPONSOR A CAR OR THE RHINO CHARGE EVENT

The Rhino Charge offers some fantastic branding and PR opportunities and is a unique way to support Rhino Ark's conservation efforts.

HELP OUT AT THE EVENT

If you are interested in volunteering at the Charge please get in touch with us on info@rhinocharge.or.ke

ENTER A TEAM OR JOIN AN EXISTING TEAM

Spaces are limited and competition is fierce but one a Charger, always a Charger! If you are interested in getting involved please contact us on info@rhinocharge.or.ke

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

For lots of news and information about the Rhino Charge follow us:

Instagram: @Rhino.Charge
Twitter: @Rhino_Charge
Facebook: @RhinoChargeKenya
YouTube: @Rhino.Charge
TikTok: @rhinocharge4x4

www.rhinocharge.or.ke

HOW TO SPONSOR A TEAM

MPESA

MPESA payments must be done in the following way:

- Lipa na M-PESA
- Pay Bill
- Enter business no. 855995
- Account No. (Car no. being sponsored e.g.CAR01)
- Enter amount

BANK TRANSFER

If you wish to make a donation by direct transfer to Rhino Ark's bank account, kindly contact us on: Email: info@rhinoark.or.ke,
Please include the relevant car number you are making payment for in the description for the transfer.

CHEQUE

Please ensure that all Cheques are made out to:
RHINO ARK KENYA CHARITABLE TRUST
When delivering a Cheque to Rhino Ark please ensure that the relevant car number is clearly stated on the envelope.

ONLINE GIVING

Many of the teams have set themselves up with online giving pages please go to our website to see the teams' details.

PATRONS:

LORD ABERDARE DL.

DR. DAVID WESTERN

DR. SALLY KOSGEI

JONATHAN SCOTT

US TRUSTEES:

SHEENA BLISS, GEORGE GRIFFIN,

MARK SOMEN, PAUL REILLO

UK TRUSTEES:

GUY TRITTON, SIR KIT KABERRY,

JOHN BOWDEN, NICHOLAS KUHLE,

JOHN EDWARDS, PATRICK ORR

KENYA DIRECTORS:

PETER KINYUA

ALAN MCKITTRICK

BRIAN HAWORTH, MICHAEL TURNER

ADIL KHAWAJA, JONATHAN SOMEN

CRISTA CULLEN, PATRICK AVERY

MARIAM ABDULLAHI

THANK YOU!

Rhino Ark wishes to thank the following people and companies who have provided services or specific donations in cash or kind to Rhino Ark.

- **ChallengeAid** - Support to the Schools of Hope (Aberdares)
- **KWS** - Rhino Ark Offices
- **IDH-ISLA & Finlays** - Support to the surveillance flights (South Western Mau)
- **Flamingo Horticulture Kenya Ltd** - Supply of plastic posts
- **Wilder Institute / Calgary Zoo** - Support to forest conservation / community livelihoods in Eburu Forest
- **Wilder Institute / Calgary Zoo** - Support to forest conservation / community livelihoods in Ragati Forest, Mt. Kenya
- **Rare Species Conservatory Foundation** - Support to the conservation of the mountain bongo
- **Elephant Cooperation** - Construction of one wildlife underpass in Imenti Forest
- **Eburru Rafiki** - Community livelihoods and ecotourism support
- **ClimateCare** - Support towards planting and maintaining 20,000 trees in Mt. Kenya
- **AutoXpress** - Provision of tyres for all Rhino Ark vehicles
- **MPESA Foundation** - Support for the maintenance of Eburu Electric Fence and the establishment of tree nurseries in schools
- **Tusk Trust** - support towards community engagement and firefighting preparedness in Eburu
- **Tusk Trust** - support towards Aberdare Joint Surveillance Unit.
- **Platinum Credit & Platcorp Foundation** - support towards reforestation in South Western Mau
- **African Elephant Fund (UNEP)** - support towards elephant conservation in Imenti Forest, Mt. Kenya
- **Upper Tana Natural Resources Management Project (IFAD-GoK)** - support towards the fencing of Mt. Kenya
- **Kenya Pipeline Company** - support towards the fencing of Mt. Kenya
- **Fresno Chaffee Zoo** - support towards the fencing of Mt. Kenya

Order your copy of:

- Environmental, social and economic assessment of the fencing of the Aberdare Conservation Area. Available for KES 3,000 only.
- Rhino Ark Profile.
- 2021 Spirit of the Charge film in DVD. Available at KES 1,000 only.
- Rhino Charge 2022 calendar. Available at KES 1,100 only.
- Mau Eburu Guidebook. Available at KES 1,500 only.

Act now!...
help us to continue our work

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Website Donations: justgiving.com/charity/rhinoark

Rhino Ark (US)

A registered US Charity with IRC 501 (c) 3 Status
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Email: sheenab230@gmail.com
Website: www.wildlifedefenseusa.org
Website Donations:
Firstgiving.com/Rhino Ark Kenya Charitable Trust Inc.
Banking Details: US Bank, Gamon Place, Madison WI 53719

Please make cheques payable to:



THE RHINO ARK KENYA CHARITABLE TRUST
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Mobiles: +254 (0) 733 632 460, +254 (0) 724 604 233
Email: info@rhinoark.or.ke
websites: www.rhinoark.org/www.rhinocharge.co.ke

Your donations of **USD 200 or KES 20,000**
will maintain **250 meters** of fence

FRIENDS OF RHINO ARK

ACT NOW AND HELP US TO CONTINUE OUR VITAL WORK

I/We:

of.....

Please tick your selection and fill in where applicable:

- ☐ We wish to receive ARKive, the bi-annual newsletter, and enclose a cheque/Postal Order for KES 1,000 or US\$ 10.
- ☐ We wish to make a donation in the form of cheque/Postal order for 2022 (KES/US\$).
- ☐ We wish to complete a Standing Order/Deed of Covenant - please send an application form.



HELP TO SAVE OUR MOUNTAIN FORESTS AND THEIR ENDANGERED WILDLIFE



WHY IT MATTERS

The Aberdares, Mt. Kenya and the Mau mountain forests are key 'water towers' of Kenya. They are the sources of major rivers that provide the much-needed water to the city of Nairobi, which is the main contributor to the country's GDP. These rivers support the livelihoods of millions of households in the rural areas and are the lifeline of key conservation and tourism areas downstream. Together these three mountain ecosystems provide yearly ecological services to Kenya worth KES 412 billion (\$4.12 billion).

These important forests include World Heritage Sites, Important Bird Areas and National Parks. The critically endangered Black rhino and Mountain bongo antelope, the African elephant and the vulnerable leopard are among the iconic wildlife species that inhabit them.

The forest-adjacent communities are critical to conservation of these forests. They are the front-line guardians. Conversely, they are the most directly dependent on the forests and also the most impacted by human-wildlife conflict.



WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED?

- 1.6 BILLION KENYA SHILLINGS (\$16 MILLION) invested in conservation
- 650 KILOMETERS of game-proof electrified fences built
- Over 500,000 hectares of MOUNTAIN FOREST SECURED
- 80,000 KENYAN FAMILIES protected from human/wildlife conflict, and their livelihoods secured
- 178 SCHOOLS actively learning about conservation
- 90 HECTARES OF FOREST rehabilitated

DONATE!

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

We welcome your kind donations to support our work. Your contributions help us achieve the following:

1. Fencing programme

Our comprehensive game-proof electrified fences help secure prime indigenous forests and resolve human/wildlife conflict, keeping forest-adjacent communities engaged in conservation. One kilometre of electrified fence costs KES 2.5 million (\$ 25,000). Once built, fences must be maintained continuously. We have 174 fence attendants maintaining our fences daily, supported by eight 4x4 vehicles. Fence maintenance costs KES 80,000 (\$800) per kilometre per year.

2. Endangered species and forest conservation

Support our community-based patrol programme:

The Aberdare Joint Surveillance Unit (AJSU) is an elite, 7-man team of community scouts that patrols the Aberdare ecosystem. AJSU targets illegal activities such as logging, charcoal kilns, snaring and wildlife trapping. They also monitor wildlife abundance and distribution, gather intelligence information, and participate in forest fire fighting. KES 73,500 (\$735) can cover a 2-week field mission.

In Eburu, a 5-man Foot Patrol Team responds to local intelligence reports to enact dark sting operations to catch would-be wildlife or forestry criminals. Their main targets are wildlife snares, illegal logging and charcoal kilns. KES 24,000 (\$240) can cover a 2-day field operation.

Support forest rehabilitation:

Large areas of prime mountain forest habitats degraded by illegal human activities and forest fires need to be rehabilitated. Donate to help restore our mountain forests. KES 100 (\$1) will enable planting and caring for a tree seedling.

3. Community conservation and livelihoods

Our community programmes are geared towards reducing forest adjacent communities' reliance on forest resources, improving their livelihoods, and raising their environmental awareness. These interventions result in their participation in forest conservation, adoption of on-farm best practices and improvement of incomes.

HOW TO DONATE

1. Mobile money
2. Bank Transfer
3. PayPal

If you wish to make a donation kindly contact us on:
Email: sheenab230@gmail.com
Telephone: +1 608 576 0571
Or Visit our website donations page
<https://rhinoark.org/donate/>

