



PRESS STATEMENT

*For Immediate Release
8th December 2010*

Rhino Ark to fence Mt Kenya and Mau Mt Eburru

Two new projects – to comprehensively fence Mt Kenya and Mau Mt Eburru – one of the Mau's 22 forest blocks- will become Rhino Ark's prime forward conservation thrusts in 2011.

These projects will be the recipients of Kenya's home grown astonishing fund raise initiative and world unique annual event - The Rhino Charge. The next Rhino Charge will be staged on June 3, 2011. It attracts global interest.

Rhino Chargers are known for their daring at the event. We are daring to take on the equally huge challenges in Mt Kenya and Mau Eburru.

Rhino Ark will be seeking to work closely with other partners to support these significant conservation projects.

The two projects will be undertaken in full collaboration with the local communities around Mt Kenya and Mau Eburru who wish to work with Rhino Ark.

Rhino Ark will continue its close partnership with the Government to roll out these projects – working with the Kenya Forest Service (KFS) and the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS).

The Mt Kenya fence will encircle over 2000 km² and will be at least 400 kms long – equal or possibly longer than the now complete Aberdares fence. It is planned that the work will start on the eastern side of Mt Kenya where communities are keen for Rhino Ark to start fence build.

It will require ksh 1 billion to build. The project could be completed within four years subject to a regular fund flow.

Mt Kenya is a prime 'water tower'. With the Aberdares these mountain ecosystems are the source of four of Kenya's seven largest river systems providing water and energy -both surface and geothermal- for Kenya's population and the city of Nairobi in which 80% of GDP is derived.

Mau Eburru is about 80 km² of pristine forest – hugely infiltrated by illegal loggers but whose forest edge communities are already trying to conserve its water catchment and indigenous forest.



Mau Eburru and Mt Kenya are strongholds of the critically endangered Eastern Mountain Bongo antelope.

It will require a fence of about 60 kms in length – a little longer than the now completed Mt Kipiriri extra section Rhino Ark undertook in 2008/09.

Mau Eburru is just 30 kms from Mt Kipiriri and the Aberdares. The Kipiriri fence adjoins the Aberdares with a wildlife easement (corridor) and was built in 18 months.

Mau Eburru will cost ksh 100 million to build.

Electrified fences are management tools to assist the management processes of those responsible for wildlife, forest and water management. They can be moved, changed direction and opened for wildlife easements.

But they also make it clear to Kenyans what is state land and there for the benefit of all Kenyans. It helps to ensure land is not stolen, excised or degraded by illegal activity. Kenyans are showing that such actions are no longer an option.

Straddling part of the Great Rift Valley, the Eburru volcano is a prime recipient of subterranean water inflows to Lake Naivasha and Lake Elementaita. Mau Eburru forms part of the Rift Valley conservation and ecology ecosystem stretching from Nakuru, Lake Nakuru National Park, the Soysambu Conservancy, Lake Naivasha, to Longonot and Hells Gate National Parks.

Rhino Ark remains committed to implementing a policy for wildlife easements and corridors as embedded in the new Constitution and which received overwhelming support in the August 2010 Referendum.

Rhino Ark will remain totally committed to the Aberdares. We will be completely involved in an overall ecosystem integrity master plan and for the long-term management of the Rhino Ark Aberdare fence.

Completed on August 28, 2009, the Aberdare fence was Rhino Ark's first project. It was built at a materials and labour cost of ksh 800 million. It has provided a successful blue print for mountain forest ecosystem conservation.

The Aberdare Trust is currently in formation. It will be a public/private partnership in which Rhino Ark and the fence edge communities will be working with the Government agencies responsible for the conservation of the Aberdares and the management the Rhino Ark fence.



When Rhino Ark began its conservation work 22 years ago, it raised just ksh 200,000 (usd 2500) in the first year. Today the annual Rhino Charge raises up to ksh 70 million.

In recent years the Government of Kenya and bi-lateral donors are contributing to the cause.

In order to complete the proposed projects swiftly we are inviting more donors to join the process.

Time is not on our side and Kenya's five 'water towers' need to be secured urgently.

Colin Church, Chairman Rhino Ark Management Committee

Rhino Ark Charitable Trust
PO Box 181 Uhuru Gardens 00517, Nbi
Wireless (020) 2136010/11
Fax: (254-20) 604246
Mobiles: 254-724-604233 / 733-632460
Websites: www.rhinoark.org / www.rhinocharge.co.ke



"Humans in harmony with habitat and wildlife"



"Charging For Conservation"