

ARK*ive*



A milestone for the Mau Forest

Fence construction for crucial ecosystem begins

Smart way to save elephants

Virtual Grid uses technology to prevent conflict with people

Nature protection pays handsomely

Mt Kenya barrier to inject returns of Sh154 billion in economy yearly





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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S VIEW

CHRISTIAN LAMBRECHTS

This past year was characterized by a major boost for Rhino Ark in terms of funding but also a great expansion in its conservation portfolio.

Indeed, Rhino Ark, with the support of conservation partners, secured the largest grant in its history amounting to Euro 2,291,189 (approximately KES 317 million) from the European Union's NaturAfrica programme.

This funding will support a much-expanded programme aiming to conserve and restore the southern part of the Mau and provide tangible benefits to the forest-adjacent communities through nature-based enterprises, with a specific focus on eco-tourism.

Although less known to the public than other montane forest ecosystems, the southern part of the Mau comprises 158,000 hectares of continuous indigenous forest. It is as large as three quarters of Mt. Kenya. It forms the headwaters of major rivers such as the Sondu, Mara, and Ewaso Ng'iro, which support hydropower, irrigation, urban water supply, and biodiversity across the region. It also underpins iconic ecosystems including the Maasai Mara – Serengeti, Lake Natron, and Masirori Wetlands. Its total annual economic value is estimated at KES 104 billion (approx. USD 802 million), supporting about six million people directly and indirectly, including key sectors such as tea production.

Ecologically, that ecosystem supports rich biodiversity, including the second-largest population of the critically endangered Mountain Bongo, as well as globally significant species such as Yellow-backed Duiker, Golden Cat, Giant Forest Hog, Leopard, Spotted and Striped Hyena, Black-and-white Colobus. It hosts a significant population African elephant estimated at about 1,000 individuals.

The southern part of the Mau also holds significant untapped ecotourism potential — scenic landscapes, waterfalls, wildlife, and cultural heritage offer strong prospects for low-impact, community-led tourism.

In light of its richness in biodiversity and tourism potential, Rhino Ark spearheaded the concept of making the southern part of the Mau a tourism-based conservation area to operate as a twin with the famous Maasai Mara National Reserve, thereby creating a tourist circuit with diverse experience that would benefit KFS, the County Government of Narok and the local communities.

MISSION, VISION AND KEY PRIORITY AREAS



Rhino Ark is a charitable trust established in Kenya in 1988 with the vision to restore and maintain harmony between humans, habitats and wildlife in Kenya.

To this end, Rhino Ark aims to be a trusted partner in advocating, developing and implementing high-impact forest, water catchments and endangered wildlife conservation initiatives that tangibly support adjacent local communities.



Rhino Ark 's conservation programme is developed around six priority thematic areas:

1. Trusted Partner

Rhino Ark is the partner of choice in the long-term conservation of forests and their wildlife in Kenya.

2. Advocacy

Rhino Ark is a thought leader and senior advisor on forest and wildlife conservation in Kenya.

3. Innovation

Rhino Ark is a leader in the development and implementation of high-impact dynamic conservation solutions.

4. Forest and water catchment conservation

Rhino Ark develops and implements long-term management tools that protect and restore forest ecosystems and their water catchment values.

5. Endangered wildlife conservation

Rhino Ark develops and implements conservation interventions that protect and recover endangered forest species, including black rhino, mountain bongo and forest elephant.

6. Tangible community support

Rhino Ark develops and implements long-term solutions to human-wildlife conflicts, spearheads conservation education and champions conservation-based livelihoods within forest-adjacent communities.

FOREST ECOSYSTEMS

MAU EBURU

Untold journeys of Kenya's ecosystem guardians

Deep in the heart of Kenya's mountain forests, where the whisper of trees replaces the hum of traffic and only the bold dare to tread, begins a journey of extraordinary commitment. Here, where roads give way to ridges, and the landscape is as challenging as it is breathtaking, Rhino Ark's rangers walk thousands of kilometres every month — not for glory, but for a purpose far greater than themselves.

Armed with little more than resolve, courage, and an unyielding dedication to conservation, these rangers are the unsung guardians of Kenya's critical mountain ecosystems. Their daily patrols take them through dense undergrowth, over treacherous slopes, and into some of the most remote corners of the Aberdares, Mount Kenya, and Mau Forests. Their mission? To

protect the life that thrives in these ancient forests — from endangered wildlife to the water catchments that sustain millions of people downstream.

But their work is more than wildlife protection. They also defend entire watersheds, quietly ensuring that the forests continue to filter and supply clean water to towns, farms, and homes. They stand as a vital bridge between nature and community, often the first responders to human-wildlife conflict and forest threats like illegal logging, snares, and wildfires.

To walk in their footsteps is to witness resilience in its truest form. Each step taken is a statement of hope — a declaration that Kenya's mountain forests are worth every ounce of effort.

In a world increasingly disconnected from the natural rhythms of the wild, Rhino Ark rangers remain grounded on the frontline of conservation. And though their stories may begin where roads end, the impact of their work reaches far beyond the forest.



Rangers on foot patrol in Mau Eburu Forest.



Mau Eburu Forest rangers on patrol in new uniforms.

New gear, renewed spirit

The Eburu Joint Surveillance Unit recently received a new set of raincoats and enhanced mobility support, equipping them to effectively and comfortably perform their work, even in challenging weather conditions.

The unit plays a crucial role in protecting Kenya's forest heritage by patrolling deep within the dense greenery of Eburu Forest. With the new equipment, the dedicated team will do its work come rain or shine.

Our camera traps captured these vigilant

guardians quietly moving through the forest, their presence a constant reminder of the commitment to protect this vital ecosystem. Every step they take helps safeguard biodiversity, maintain forest health, and preserve the lifeblood of local communities that depend on clean water and natural resources.

By strengthening the capacity of the surveillance unit, Rhino Ark ensures that protection efforts remain resilient and adaptive — a vital factor for conservation success in the face of unpredictable weather and rugged terrain.

The new equipment will ensure that the Eburu Joint Surveillance Unit continues to defend Kenya's natural heritage so that this irreplaceable forest remains a sanctuary for generations to come.

Guidebook documents nature's healing power

A publication on medicinal plants of Eburu Forest launched recently is a living testament to indigenous knowledge, community-led conservation, and the enduring bond between people and nature.

"Common Medicinal Plants of Eburu Forest" was developed after three years of monthly forest walks by communities living around the forest.

The Eburu Forest Community Conservation Champions worked diligently to identify, document, and preserve the plants that have long supported local health and wellbeing. Each page of this publication reflects a journey of learning, preservation, and empowerment, led

by the people who depend on the forest most.

This vital work resonates far beyond Eburu. It complements Rhino Ark's continued support for the South-Western Mau Ogiek Herbalists Workshops, in which Ogiek elders share their ancestral plant knowledge and sustainable harvesting techniques.

A recent workshop culminated in a hands-on harvesting of herbal medicine deep within the Mau Forest — a reaffirmation of the resilience and relevance of traditional ecological wisdom.

Whether in Eburu or the Mau, these efforts are united by a common vision: that forests thrive when local communities lead — guided by

time-honoured practices passed down through generations. Rhino Ark is proud to stand with these knowledge holders, amplifying their voices and championing conservation models rooted in cultural heritage, respect, and sustainability.



The book, "Common Medicinal Plants of Eburu Forest," will be used for education and conservation awareness.

SOUTH-WESTERN MAU

Milestone for the Mau as protection barrier is launched

The first phase of the South-Western Mau Fence Conservation Project was launched on May 22, 2025, marking a major step in protecting one of Kenya's most vital ecosystems.

The vibrant grounds of Kusmek came alive with song, dance, colour, and shared purpose as Rhino Ark and its partners officially launched the project. This landmark event, officiated by Dr. Deborah Baraza, Cabinet Secretary for the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, brought together a powerful coalition of conservation champions.

Partners in attendance included the Kenya Forest Service, Kenya Wildlife Service, Kenya Tea Development Agency, Swire, Lipton, Initiative for Sustainable Landscapes, IDH Kenya, the local Community Forest Association, and neighbouring communities.

The project will address the escalating human-wildlife conflict and restore the ecological integrity of the South-Western Mau Forest — a key water tower that sustains millions of people. Beyond its environmental goals, the project places strong emphasis on community inclusion, with features such as official forest access gates and identity-based user rights, implemented through the CFA. This ensures that conservation efforts are balanced with local livelihoods.

The project is a powerful symbol of what is possible when government, private sector, civil society, and communities unite in purpose.

Rhino Ark thanked all stakeholders and community members whose dedication and collaboration made this day a success — and a promising beginning.



Rhino Ark's Executive Director, Christian Lambrechts, plants a tree at the launch of the South-Western Mau electric fence project.



Dr Deborah Baraza, the Environment and Forestry CS, unveils the South-Western Mau fence project plaque as other partners look on.



Members of the community install a donor signboard at Rhino Ark-Platinum Credit site in the South-Western Mau.

Regeneration alliance takes root

Eighty hectares of degraded forest in the South-Western Mau have been rehabilitated over the last four years, thanks to collaboration between Rhino Ark and Platcorp Foundation.

The partnership began in 2021, with the rehabilitation of 10 hectares at Kapkembu, and has since expanded significantly. In 2022, 40 hectares were restored in Tirigoi A/B, followed by an additional 30 hectares in Tirigoi D in 2023.

This is one of the most impactful forest restoration efforts in the South-Western Mau ecosystem - a critical part of Kenya's water tower network and one of the country's most ecologically significant landscapes. It has contributed to a broader national goal of reversing forest loss and safeguarding biodiversity.

At the heart of this success was a strong emphasis on community inclusion and local stewardship. Each site is managed by two local scouts, whose role is to monitor seedling growth and carry out essential maintenance

such as weeding and replacing lost trees. Their commitment ensured a high tree survival rate of 80%, a remarkable figure in reforestation efforts.

Beyond the environmental benefits, the initiative also creates valuable employment opportunities, providing income to households in forest-adjacent areas while instilling a deeper sense of ownership and responsibility toward conservation.

The project's progress was marked by signboards placed at each restoration site— not just as indicators of land reclaimed, but as lasting symbols of collaboration, resilience, and a shared vision.

None of this would be possible without the unwavering support of the Kenya Forest Service, the Platcorp Foundation, and the communities of the South-Western Mau. Together, they proved that with the right partnerships, Kenya's forests can thrive once again.

Stakeholders meet to assess impact of forest fence

The Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) Stakeholder Workshop for the South-Western Mau Forest Fence Project was held in Molo, marking a pivotal step in the project's development. An independent consultant had engaged extensively with local communities, gathering vital insights and concerns to inform the assessment process.

The workshop brought together a diverse group of participants, including community representatives, government officials, conservation partners, and technical experts. The collaborative forum focused on discussing key findings, addressing challenges, and collectively shaping a path forward that balances environmental conservation with community needs.

The South-Western Mau Forest is a crucial water tower and biodiversity hotspot. This ESIA initiative aimed to ensure that the fence project supported both ecosystem protection and the well-being of local livelihoods — building a foundation for sustainable conservation and social harmony.



South-Western Mau electric fence ESIA stakeholders' workshop in progress.



The workshop brought together community representatives, government officials, conservation partners and technical experts.

Nursery nurtures biodiversity hope

A Rhino Ark tree nursery deep in the heart of Ndoinet, South-Western Mau, stands as a vibrant symbol of hope and ecological regeneration.

The nursery is managed in collaboration with local communities and nurtures thousands of indigenous tree seedlings, each destined to play a crucial role in restoring degraded forests. These efforts directly contribute to protecting vital water catchments that sustain both wildlife and people downstream.

In addition to its environmental impact, the nursery empowers local stakeholders to become active custodians of their natural heritage - demonstrating how community-driven conservation can heal landscapes and secure a sustainable future.



Rhino Ark and Community Forest Association inspect Ndoinet tree nursery.

Weeding boosts seedling survival at Sophia

More than 40,000 indigenous tree seedlings at the Sophia rehabilitation site in the Aberdares were recently weeded in a conservation exercise organised by Rhino Ark.

Some 47,750 seedlings spread across 35 hectares benefited from the spot weeding which ensures that the young trees can thrive without being outcompeted by invasive weeds.

Spot weeding, a critical conservation practice, reduces competition for nutrients, water, and light - factors essential for healthy seedling growth and higher survival rates.

Twelve community members were engaged in the weeding, working together to restore one of Kenya's precious forests.

This hands-on session was more than a technical task; it was an opportunity to strengthen community involvement in sustainable land management. By actively participating in nurturing these seedlings, local members reinforce their role as guardians of the forest and contribute directly to the restoration of biodiversity within the Aberdare landscape.

This initiative underscored Rhino Ark's commitment to blending ecological restoration with community empowerment - ensuring that Kenya's mountain forests remain vibrant and resilient for generations to come.



Boda Boda Riders Empowered to Protect a Fragile Ecosystem

Eighty-five Boda Boda riders in the Aberdares have been trained and certified as conservation champions, marking a powerful new approach to environmental protection and community engagement.

The riders — who traverse forest routes daily — received comprehensive training in road safety, waste management, and ecosystem conservation, equipping them with the skills to safeguard one of Kenya's most vital natural treasures.

By empowering this influential group, the initiative seeks to blend environmental stewardship with economic empowerment, ensuring that conservation efforts go hand in hand with community well-being.

The programme was implemented through a partnership between Rhino

Ark, Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), Kenya Forest Service (KFS), and the National Transport and Safety Authority (NTSA).

"By working with those who know the forest best, we are building a stronger, more inclusive network of guardians — one champion at a time," said a Rhino Ark representative.

Warmly welcomed by local communities and stakeholders, the programme demonstrates how innovative partnerships can deliver lasting conservation impact. By engaging everyday forest users as active protectors, the initiative strengthens the link between livelihoods and environmental protection — preserving Kenya's natural heritage for generations to come.



Trained Boda Boda riders in the Aberdares proudly display their conservation and safety certificates.

New scenic hiking trail a haven for adventure seekers

A new hiking route connecting Mikeu Table to Ol Donyo Lesatima has been launched. Stretching 30.5 kilometres, this trail meanders through some of Kenya's most breathtaking landscapes, including Table Mountain, Seven Ponds and Rurimeria.

It was launched through a partnership between Rhino Ark and the Darwin Initiative.

Designed for adventure seekers and nature lovers alike, the route promises stunning views and unforgettable experiences while highlighting the rich biodiversity and cultural heritage of the region.

In addition to recreation, this initiative is a powerful boost to local livelihoods. It engages community members as expert guides and porters, thereby creating sustainable economic opportunities that align with conservation goals.

Rhino Ark thanked the Kenya Wildlife Service, Kenya Forest Service, the local communities, and all partner organisations whose collaboration made this project possible.

This new trail marks another step forward in promoting conservation-friendly tourism that celebrates Kenya's natural treasures while supporting the people who protect them.

Wanjohi-Shamata fence completed

The 10-kilometre Wanjohi-Shamata conservation fence — a critical line of protection between communities and wildlife — was officially completed on March 31, 2025.

The placement of the final post marked a transformative milestone in Kenya's wildlife conservation journey. This vital project, spearheaded by Rhino Ark in collaboration with the Kenya Wildlife Service, Kenya Forest Service, and local communities, is set to dramatically reduce human-wildlife conflict in this biodiversity-rich region.

The commissioning ceremony was filled with symbolism and celebration. A ceremonial tree was planted to mark both the physical completion of the fence and the deep-rooted partnerships that made it possible. From high-tensile wire straining to the final structural checks, the project reflected technical precision, environmental stewardship and community unity.

Funded by the Darwin Initiative and managed by Rhino Ark, this fence is now in excellent condition - regularly maintained and monitored to ensure its long-term impact. It is expected to play a key role in protecting both people and wildlife, while enhancing the ecological stability of the region.

Adding weight to the occasion was the presence of Jim Nyamu, Executive Director of the Elephant Neighbours Centre and leader of

the "Ivory Belongs to Elephants" movement. Mr Nyamu, who was the chief guest, praised the collaborative nature of the project and called for continued united action in safeguarding Kenya's iconic wildlife and vital ecosystems.

The Wanjohi-Shamata fence is more than just a barrier - it is a symbol of what is possible when communities, conservationists, and government agencies come together with a shared vision. It is an example of people-centred conservation, securing a more peaceful coexistence between humans and wildlife for generations to come.



Event setup to mark completion of the 12 km Wanjohi — Shamata fence in the Aberdares.



The fence is a symbol of what is possible when communities, conservationists, and government agencies come together with a shared vision.



Ceremonial post planting to mark completion of the 12 km Wanjohi-Shamata fence in the Aberdares.

New rainwater tanks a boost for tree nurseries

Rhino Ark, in partnership with Rhino Ark UK, donated three rainwater harvesting tanks to Metha, Kariki, and Kiandogoro Comprehensive schools in the Aberdares region.

This initiative, part of Rhino Ark's broader rainwater harvesting programme, supported schools located near Kenya's vital mountain forests by improving access to clean water for drinking, sanitation, and nurturing tree nurseries.

The handover event was attended by representatives from the Kenya Wildlife Service, school officials, and Rhino Ark leadership — including Deputy Executive Director of Operations Moses Muthoki, Fence & Community Manager Adam Mwangi, and Conservation Education Head Peter Munene.

Rhino Ark has now donated 10 tanks to schools bordering the Aberdare ecosystem. Access to water will transform these institutions into active conservation hubs where students not only benefit from a healthier learning environment but also participate in reforestation and environmental stewardship activities.

The tanks enable schools to run tree nurseries and kitchen gardens - practical tools that link classroom knowledge to real-world sustainability practices.

This expansion was made possible through the support of Rhino Ark UK and its fundraisers, including participants in the 2024 London Marathon and Ride London. Their contributions are helping Rhino Ark to address one of Kenya's most pressing challenges — water scarcity— while advancing our mission to protect forest ecosystems and build conservation - minded communities.

In a country where more than 18 million people still lack reliable access to safe water, each tank represents not just a resource, but a step towards long - term resilience and education-driven conservation.



Handover of water tanks to Metha Comprehensive School (above) and Kiandogoro Comprehensive School (below). The tanks enable schools to run tree nurseries and kitchen gardens.



Growing roots for the future one seedling at a time

The Mega Indigenous Tree Nursery Project received a major boost through activities that will help in restoring degraded forest areas while strengthening community involvement in long-term conservation.

The activities included volunteers participating in nursery tasks such as clean-up, pricking out seedlings, potting, weeding, and watering. Each action — however small — played a role in nurturing the forest's future.

The project is a collaboration of Rhino Ark, in partnership with the Kenya Forest Service and local community members.

Now home to 87,569 indigenous tree seedlings, the nursery was already having a meaningful impact. These seedlings will eventually be planted across degraded areas in the Aberdares, helping to stabilise soils, improve biodiversity, and restore vital water catchments. But the impact goes beyond ecological recovery - this project is also about empowering local communities as stewards of their natural environment.

Supported by the Darwin Initiative, the Mega Indigenous Tree Nursery Project is part of a broader vision: a restored and resilient landscape sustained through collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and community-led action. It reflects Rhino Ark's enduring belief that conservation is strongest when it is rooted in local ownership and fueled by shared responsibility.



Geta Community tree nursery attendant carries out routine maintenance at the nursery site.

Heroes of Kenya's natural heritage

Rhino Ark rangers play a critical role in safeguarding Mt Kenya, which has some of the country's most vital natural assets.

Every step the rangers take on their patrols across the rugged landscapes of the mountain is a powerful stride towards protecting water towers, endangered wildlife, and forest-dependent communities.

These frontline heroes are more than just patrollers; they are the heartbeat of conservation. Their daily duties range from dismantling illegal snares that threaten wildlife, securing critical habitats, to engaging with local communities and monitoring the overall health of the forests.

Through tireless vigilance and unwavering commitment, the rangers ensure that these ecosystems continue to thrive, sustaining biodiversity and supporting livelihoods for generations to come. Their work embodies the spirit of protection and stewardship at the core of Rhino Ark's mission.



A ranger on patrol crosses a log bridge in Ragati Forest, Mt. Kenya.

Nature clubs to incubate future conservationists

Eight new Wildlife Nature Conservation Clubs have been established in secondary schools along the forest edge at Ragati-Chehe. This brings the number of active clubs in the Mt. Kenya ecosystem to 23 — and growing!

These vibrant clubs supported by Rhino Ark are more than just extracurricular groups. They are incubators for environmental leadership, equipping students with practical tools and knowledge to become forest and wildlife guardians. Through activities such as tree planting, waste management, biodiversity education, and community engagement, these young conservation champions are turning awareness into action.

By instilling a sense of responsibility and connection to the forests they live alongside, Rhino Ark is nurturing a new generation of stewards who will carry the torch for conservation long into the future.

The forests may be ancient, but their future now rests in the capable hands of tomorrow's leaders - and with 23 clubs already active, that future looks promising.



Above and below: Nature Club members engage in practical conservation sessions.



Young conservationists — Nature Club pupils showcase their creative artwork in support of conservation.



Fence project to inject KSh154bn in economy annually

The 450-kilometre Mt Kenya Fence project is expected to inject returns of KSh154 billion annually into the Kenyan economy once complete, Rhino Ark's Executive Director Christian Lambrechts has said.

Speaking during the official launch of Phase VI of the project, Mr Lambrechts said the returns include ecosystem benefits and community livelihoods through agriculture. The total cost of the project is KSh1.5 billion.

The launch ceremony was officiated by Ms Rebecca Miano, Cabinet Secretary for Tourism and Wildlife.

In her remarks, Ms Miano praised Rhino Ark's dedication to protecting critical water sources and highlighted the fence's role in saving the government billions in compensation costs related to wildlife incidents.

She was joined by Ms Silvia Museiya, Principal Secretary of the State Department for Wildlife, alongside representatives from Kenya Wildlife Service, Kenya Forest Service, local government officials and community members.

The event celebrated the continued progress of this landmark initiative aimed at reducing human-wildlife conflict around Mt. Kenya. Since its inception in 2012, the Mt. Kenya Fence has extended to 300 km, with 150 km remaining to reach the full 450-km target.

The launch also reinforced the significance of increasing national tree cover to improve rainfall patterns. These complementary conservation efforts support local agriculture and sustainable economic growth, ensuring that communities around Mt. Kenya thrive alongside the natural environment.

Installation of electric fences around Kenya's mountain forest ecosystems is a powerful tool at the heart of Rhino Ark's conservation mission. The fences are more than physical barriers - they are lifelines of protection, resilience, and peaceful coexistence.

By preventing wild animals from straying into nearby villages and farmlands, the fences reduce human-wildlife conflict. Farmers can tend their crops in peace. Children can walk to school without fear. And wildlife, from elephants to forest hogs, remain safely within their natural habitats.

These barriers have proven transformative in ecosystems like the Aberdares, Mt. Kenya, and the Mau Forests, where communities once plagued by crop loss and conflict now experience improved security, economic stability, and renewed stewardship of the land.

For Rhino Ark, this is more than a conservation intervention - it is a commitment to building a future where people and nature live in harmony.



A section of the Mount Kenya comprehensive electric fence line.



Tourism and Wildlife CS Rebecca Miano, Nyeri Deputy Governor Kinariri Waroe, PS Silvia Museiya, Rhino Ark Executive Director Christian Lambrechts and community members join hands to construct a section of the Mount Kenya fence.



KAKAMEGA FOREST

Protecting Kenya's sole tropical rainforest a top priority

Rhino Ark has started Phase 2 of the conservation of Kakamega Forest, Kenya's last remaining tropical rainforest.

This phase will take the conservation project deeper into both Kakamega and Vihiga counties. It is not just about putting up more fencing—it is about strengthening ecosystems and community ties. Every fence post installed is a declaration of commitment: to biodiversity, to sustainable livelihoods, and to climate resilience.

Kakamega Forest is one of Kenya's most ecologically significant landscapes. This unique forest is not only home to rare species and endemic biodiversity, but it also plays a critical role in supporting local communities and

stabilising the region's climate. Today, it stands as a symbol of both natural heritage and conservation urgency.

In February 2023, Rhino Ark launched Phase 1 of the Kakamega Forest Conservation Project. This first stretch was successfully completed and marked a vital step forward in securing the forest's future.

The work laid a solid foundation for protecting wildlife corridors, reducing human-wildlife conflict, and ensuring local communities had a stronger voice in forest conservation. It also helped build trust and momentum among stakeholders, demonstrating what is possible through collaborative action.

This work would not be possible without the support of our key partners, including the County Governments of Kakamega and Vihiga, the Kenya Forest Service, the Kenya Wildlife Service, NetFund, UNDP, and Safaricom Foundation. Together with local communities, they are walking this journey with us - ensuring that the forest is not only protected but that it continues to thrive for generations to come.

The Kakamega Forest project is a testament to what integrated conservation can achieve. As we look ahead, Rhino Ark remains committed to preserving this irreplaceable forest through long-term partnerships, scientific insight, and the power of community-led stewardship.

KAKAMEGA FOREST & NATIONAL RESERVES FENCE PROGRESS MAP - 3 JULY 2025



Lurambi Fence Line.



Kibiri Fence Camp.

RHINO ARK NEWS

SMART boost for data-driven conservation work

Twenty-eight scouts and nine field officers operating across four key forest ecosystems have been trained in a Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART) in a significant leap forward for data-driven conservation.

This cutting-edge initiative reflects Rhino Ark's commitment to integrating modern technology into field operations. It gives our frontline teams in the Mt. Kenya, Aberdares, Eburu, and South-Western Mau ecosystems the tools they need to collect, analyse, and report data with greater precision and efficiency. With SMART, conservation becomes not just reactive, but proactive.

Participants were trained to use GPS-enabled devices and customised data forms to log everything from wildlife sightings and illegal activities to habitat conditions and infrastructure status. These insights will feed into a central database, helping Rhino Ark and its partners make informed decisions, allocate resources strategically, and measure impact in real time.

SMART monitoring is already being adopted globally, and this rollout places Rhino Ark at the forefront of tech-enabled conservation in Kenya. It also ensures stronger coordination with key partners such as Kenya Wildlife Service, Kenya Forest Service, and local Community Forest Associations.



Rhino Ark field staff in SMART technology training.

Angela Scott joins Rhino Ark UK as Patron



Rhino Ark UK Patron, Angela Scott.

Rhino Ark UK is honoured to announce the appointment of Angela Scott, an internationally celebrated wildlife photographer and conservationist, as its newest Patron.

Angela's name is inseparable from some of the most iconic imagery and storytelling in African wildlife history. Together with her husband, Jonathan Scott, she has spent decades capturing the beauty and drama of the natural world — particularly the majestic big cats of the Maasai Mara — through their award-winning books and the globally acclaimed BBC series, *Big Cat Diary*.

Beyond her extraordinary storytelling, Angela is a dedicated champion of conservation. Her deep love for nature and wildlife resonates profoundly with Rhino Ark's mission to protect Kenya's vital mountain ecosystems, including

the Aberdares, Mount Kenya, Eburu, and the Mau Forest Complex.

As Patron of Rhino Ark UK, Angela brings not only her influential voice but also her wealth of experience, creativity, and unwavering commitment to the protection of Kenya's natural heritage.

"Angela's work has inspired generations to care about wildlife. Her passion, integrity, and global reach will help us amplify the message of conservation like never before," said Rhino Ark UK.

Angela's involvement marks a significant milestone for Rhino Ark's conservation efforts. Her advocacy will help bridge global awareness with on-the-ground action, strengthening the collective resolve to safeguard forests, water towers, and biodiversity for future generations.

Rhino Ark showcases its successes at key forum

Rhino Ark participated in the 2025 Conservation Partners Forum, hosted by the Kenya Wildlife Service under the unifying theme “Making Peace with Nature.” This annual forum brings together key conservation actors to reflect, share, and strategise on the most pressing environmental and wildlife protection issues facing Kenya today.

A number of critical conversations were high on the agenda of the 2025 edition. These included the growing elephant population, the urgent need to secure wildlife corridors, and improving the welfare of community rangers — the unsung heroes on the conservation frontline. Others are the role of emerging technologies in conservation, species recovery strategies, and the importance of conservation education.

A holistic approach to human-wildlife conflict

At Rhino Ark, human-wildlife conflict mitigation remains a top priority. To date, the organisation has constructed and now maintains 778 kilometres of game-proof electric fences, which have helped protect more than 85,000 households across key ecosystems in Kenya. These fences do more than safeguard homes and farms — they support peaceful coexistence between people and wildlife. Behind their operation are 172 dedicated fence attendants, who ensure that these barriers remain functional daily.

In addition, two strategic wildlife corridors have been established, providing animals with safe passage between critical habitats while reducing their encroachment into human settlements.

Safeguarding Kenya’s endangered species

Rhino Ark also doubled down on efforts to protect critically endangered species, with a focus on the Mountain Bongo and Black Rhino. In the Mt. Kenya and Aberdare ecosystems, we are enhancing anti-poaching patrols, improving surveillance, and strengthening species monitoring systems to support recovery and ensure these iconic species have a future in the wild.

Education: The heartbeat of conservation

Education continues to be a cornerstone of Rhino Ark’s conservation mission. We actively work with 184 schools, fostering environmental awareness and a sense of stewardship among young learners. Through Wildlife Nature Conservation Clubs, tree planting, waste management initiatives, and biodiversity lessons, we are cultivating a new generation of conservation-minded citizens.

Reinforcing the power of community

The Conservation Partners Forum reaffirmed a core belief we have long held at Rhino Ark: community involvement is central to the success of any conservation initiative. From maintaining fences to monitoring wildlife, from traditional knowledge to youth education, lasting change begins with those who live closest to the forests and wildlife we strive to protect.



The 2025 Conservation Partners Forum took place at KWS Headquarters in Nairobi.



Rhino Ark staff who participated in the 2025 Conservation Partners Forum.



The forum brings together conservation actors to reflect, share and strategise on the most pressing environmental and wildlife protection issues facing Kenya today.

ENDANGERED WILDLIFE

MAU EBURU

Camera traps reveal elusive forest pigs in action

Who is sneaking quietly through the undergrowth of Eburu Forest when no one is watching? Thanks to our hidden camera traps, the mystery has been solved — it is the forest's own wild residents, the bush pigs and giant forest hogs.

These shy mammals are nocturnal, usually active under the cover of darkness. But recently, camera traps have captured them foraging during daytime across the forest floor. The distinctive blonde tufts on the jaws of the bush pigs and the unmistakable large cheek discs of the giant forest hogs make them stand out in the dense vegetation.

These rare daytime sightings provide valuable insights into the behaviour and ecology of these important forest dwellers. Their presence is a positive indicator of a healthy ecosystem and highlights the rich biodiversity that Rhino Ark is committed to protecting.

Watching these secretive creatures in broad daylight reminds us just how vibrant and dynamic the Eburu Forest truly is - a hidden world teeming with life, even when we are not looking.



Giant forest hog on trap camera.

MT KENYA

Smart fencing heralds new era in conservation



Rhino Ark has unveiled a Virtual Elephant Grid — a revolutionary solution that brings a new level of sophistication to human-wildlife conflict mitigation.

Unlike traditional fencing, the Virtual Elephant Grid uses non-invasive technologies to deter elephants from moving into human settlement areas, without interrupting the natural behaviour of wildlife or fragmenting critical habitat. This innovation represents a major leap forward in harmonising the needs of conservation with those of local communities.

Developed by Instarect Ltd. and fully funded by the Wyss Academy, this cutting-edge system has been installed at Nchoroiboro, in the Imenti forest on the slopes of Mount Kenya. It was officially handed over to the Kenya Wildlife Service and Rhino Ark during a ceremony attended by Mr Felix Kithinji, Member of County Assembly for Ruiri/Rwarera Ward.

Innovation has long been at the heart of Rhino

Ark's conservation journey. From pioneering Kenya's first game-proof electric fences to introducing rolling elephant grids, automatic elephant gates, and advanced fence monitoring systems, we have consistently embraced smart technologies to protect both wildlife and the communities that live alongside them.

The successful implementation of this project stands as a model of what can be achieved through effective public-private partnerships. By uniting expertise, funding, and on-the-ground experience, we are building a smarter, more adaptive approach to conservation - one that reflects both the complexity of the challenges and the ingenuity of the solutions.

At Rhino Ark, we remain committed to being at the forefront of sustainable innovation - pushing boundaries, leveraging technology, and forging collaborations that ensure Kenya's forests and wildlife are protected for generations to come.



Virtual Elephant Grid system in Imenti Forest.

Fresh roadmap for Mountain Bongo

A stakeholders' meeting was held recently to develop a new blueprint for safeguarding the majestic Mountain Bongo which is endemic to Kenya.

The National Mountain Bongo Stakeholder Meeting brought together nearly 80 representatives from government agencies, community associations, NGOs, and private conservation organisations. Together, these voices form a united front dedicated to the future of one of Kenya's most iconic and critically endangered species.

At the heart of the meeting was a comprehensive review of the now-expired National Mountain Bongo Recovery and Action Plan - affectionately known as the "Bongo Bible." Stakeholders engaged in in-depth discussions to draft the next five-year roadmap that will guide efforts to protect and recover the mountain Bongo, a species found exclusively in Kenya's forests.

The meeting featured insights from leaders across research, in-situ conservation, captive breeding, and reintroduction efforts. The level of collaboration, expertise, and shared commitment on display reflected decades of tireless work and underscored what is achievable when conservation is truly collective.

This critical process was led by the Kenya Wildlife Service with strong support from key partners including the Mt Kenya Wildlife Conservancy, Wilder Institute / Calgary Zoo, and Rhino Ark.

Each step taken during this meeting brought Kenya closer to a future where the mountain Bongo not only survives but thrives in the wild. The gathering was a powerful moment of alignment, passion, and shared purpose, captured in images that tell the story of hope and action.

Together, we are co-creating a recovery and management plan rooted in science, community engagement, and long-term commitment to protecting this unique species for generations to come.



Mountain Bongo Recovery Action Plan workshop in progress.



A book presentation at the workshop.

AI boosts wildlife monitoring in kenya's mountain forests



Trap Camera setup.

The use of artificial intelligence technology in the analysis of camera trap photos is set to significantly improve Rhino Ark's image-sorting workflows.

This follows a three-day training led by Llewellyn Haines, Field Technician with the Wilder Institute/Calgary Zoo.

With 35 camera traps deployed in one of Kenya's mountain forest ecosystems and another 15 at a second site, Rhino Ark manages a massive and growing volume of wildlife images. The data collected is invaluable for understanding species movements, habitat

use, and biodiversity trends, but the challenge lies in processing it all efficiently.

The incorporation of artificial intelligence into our monitoring efforts is a game-changer. AI-assisted sorting allows our teams to rapidly scan and categorise thousands of images, freeing up time for in-depth analysis and quicker response to conservation needs on the ground.

This training marked a significant evolution in how Rhino Ark gathers and uses ecological data - ensuring our conservation efforts are more informed, timely, and impactful.

GPS device trials bring rewilding success closer

In the heart of the misty Mt. Kenya forests, Rhino Ark has taken another important step towards wildlife protection and species recovery. With support from Wilder Institute's Field Technician, Llewellyn Haines, and the efforts of the Mt. Kenya Joint Security Unit, the team recently completed field trials of GPS tracking devices in one of Kenya's most challenging landscapes.

The trials, conducted under dense forest canopy and amidst unpredictable mountain weather, tested the resilience of both the equipment and the team. From navigating new

technologies to enduring persistent rains, the group demonstrated exceptional perseverance and teamwork.

These tests are essential to Rhino Ark's long-term vision to monitor and protect rewilded mountain Bongos. Identifying GPS units that can perform reliably under canopy cover was critical to tracking the movements and well-being of this critically endangered species in the wild.

Real-world conservation is rarely easy, but through innovation and collaboration, each

step brings us closer to a future where mountain Bongos once again roam free and safe in Mt. Kenya's high forests.



GPS device tracking system pilot in Mt Kenya.

Meeting advances mountain Bongo conservation

A meeting was held on February 19, 2025 to discuss the ongoing mountain Bongo reintroduction project in Ragati Chehe Forest, a critical initiative to save this highly endangered species.

The 10th Joint Site Committee Meeting at Moringato, Nyeri, convened by Rhino Ark, united a diverse group of stakeholders including community leaders, government agencies, private sector partners, and NGOs.

These committee meetings serve as an essential platform for collaborative decision-making, blending scientific research with community insights. They ensure that conservation actions remain locally led, adaptive, and aligned with ecological realities. The discussions help address challenges, share progress, and chart a path forward that benefits both wildlife and people.

By strengthening partnerships and refining strategies with every session, the Joint Site Committee exemplifies the power of collective effort in safeguarding Kenya's natural heritage. Together, they were advancing the future of the mountain Bongo and the health of the Mt. Kenya ecosystem.



Mountain Bongo Joint Site Committee meeting, Nyeri.



Mountain Bongo Joint Site Committee presentation, Nyeri.

ABERDARES

Virtual system to help protect Black Rhinos

An AI-powered detection system has been installed at six key wildlife corridors in the Aberdares where preparations to establish a Black Rhino sanctuary are in progress.

A partnership between Rhino Ark and IT-Revolutions (Austria), the system targets a critical threat to young rhino calves: predation by spotted hyenas. Once a hyena is detected approaching a corridor, the system activates an ultrasonic deterrent, preventing entry. Currently in its pilot phase, the technology represents a promising step forward in ensuring the safety and survival of this critically endangered species.

The sanctuary also benefits from a real-time monitoring network designed to maintain an optimal environment for rhinos. This system continuously tracks fence voltage, water levels in nearby rivers, and

other vital operational data — enabling quick responses to any emerging issues. Together, these technologies are setting a new benchmark for how sanctuaries can be managed efficiently, securely, and with minimal environmental disruption.

This groundbreaking work would not have been possible without the vision and generosity of David Salzgeber, CEO of IT-Revolutions, whose team donated over USD 65,000 worth of advanced equipment.

Rhino Ark also thanked Chairman Peter Kinyua for facilitating the partnership, and Kenya Wildlife Service for their support throughout the installation process. As Rhino Ark continues to blend innovation with conservation, we remain committed to finding forward-thinking solutions that protect Kenya's mountain forests and their irreplaceable wildlife.

Power supply for sanctuary fence

Two energizer houses have been fully constructed, successfully powering the first 13 kilometres of the electric fence that surrounds the new Black Rhino sanctuary. These crucial hubs ensure a reliable electric current, creating a safe and secure habitat for the sanctuary's rhino residents.

Once complete, the sanctuary will span 45 square kilometres, providing much-needed refuge for Black Rhinos relocated from overcrowded sanctuaries. This expanded protected area aims to boost the population of this critically endangered species within the Aberdares ecosystem.

Rhino Ark is committed to advancing this vital conservation effort, ensuring that the sanctuary offers a haven where Black Rhinos can thrive and contribute to the long-term recovery of their species.



Black Rhino fence energizer house in the Aberdares.

COMMUNITY LIVELIHOODS

MAU EBURU

Honey benefits show harmony between people and planet

When nature and people prosper side by side

In the heart of the lush, wildlife-rich Eburu ecosystem, a quiet but powerful transformation is taking place — and it glows with the color of golden, nutrient-rich forest honey.

Through a partnership between Rhino Ark, the Eburu Natural Forest Honey Cooperative, and the Wilder Institute / Calgary Zoo (WICZ), local communities are proving that conservation and commerce can go hand in hand.

At the cooperative's modern honey processing centre, freshly harvested forest honey is handled with care to preserve its natural quality and purity. Each batch is allowed to settle for three days, a patient process that enhances clarity, deepens flavor, and captures the essence of the Eburu Forest's biodiversity.

The latest production saw 79.5 kilograms of honey packaged into 1kg and 500g plastic pots and elegant 500g glass jars — all destined for eager local and regional markets. But beyond sweetness, every jar carries a story: a story of hope, resilience, and harmony between people and the planet.

Each pot of Eburu Forest Honey represents more than a product — it's a symbol of community-led conservation. By supporting local beekeepers, the initiative offers alternative income sources, reducing pressure on the forest and inspiring collective responsibility for its protection. The result is both economic and ecological renewal: thriving livelihoods that help safeguard a critical water catchment and refuge for endangered wildlife.

"This honey isn't just about profit," says one cooperative member. "It's about pride — in our forest, our bees, and our future."

The Eburu Natural Forest Honey Cooperative stands today as a shining model of how biodiversity, enterprise, and community well-being can coexist. When people and nature prosper together, the outcomes are not only sustainable — they are transformative.



Maseto Kursen, an Eburu community member, processes pure honey.



Packed honey from Mau Eburu, a product of community-based conservation efforts.

Support for farmers yields top quality hive products

At Rhino Ark, our commitment to sustainable livelihoods goes beyond initial training — it is an ongoing partnership rooted in hands-on support. Our team regularly visits the hives of members from the Eburu Natural Forest Honey Cooperative, providing essential follow-up that strengthens both conservation and community well-being.

During these visits, we closely monitor hive colonisation rates, evaluate hive maintenance standards, and review the modifications that cooperative members have implemented following earlier training programmes. Inspection is a vital process that helps us to gauge the true impact of our training, identify challenges on the ground, and tailor support to meet the specific needs of beekeepers.

By improving hive management and boosting colonisation success, cooperative members produce higher-quality honey. This not only supports their livelihoods but also encourages bee pollination services and contributes to the conservation of the Eburu ecosystem. This initiative illustrates how empowering local communities to manage natural resources sustainably leads to thriving forests and flourishing livelihoods.

Through sustained collaboration and adaptive learning, Rhino Ark and the Eburu Honey Cooperative continue to nurture a future where nature and people prosper side by side.



A beehive in Eburu Forest.

SOUTH-WESTERN MAU

Herbalists trained in the use of traditional medicine

Herbalists from the Ogiek community have been trained on how to identify, prepare, and apply traditional medicinal plants — a cornerstone of the community's rich indigenous knowledge.

The two-day training for members of the South-Western Mau Community Herbalists Group was a significant step toward preserving both cultural heritage and forest biodiversity. It was conducted by Rhino Ark in collaboration with the Kenya Forest Service at Mau Gate Resort, Keringet, from April 29th to 30th, 2025.

Led by Dr. Mutai from the University of Nairobi and Rhino Ark conservation experts, the training covered plant botany, alternative medicine, safety protocols, and quality assurance measures.

A highlight of the workshop was a practical field session in which participants gained hands-on experience. This was in identifying key medicinal plant species, applying sustainable harvesting techniques, and understanding the challenges posed by climate change on forest resources.

The final modules focused on empowering herbalists through knowledge of regulatory compliance, registration procedures, and certification requirements, positioning them to safely and effectively bring their products to wider markets.

This initiative reflected Rhino Ark's commitment to not only conserve Kenya's vital forest ecosystems but also to empower local communities - recognising that the sustainable use of natural resources depends on honouring and supporting indigenous wisdom.

By strengthening the skills and knowledge of the herbalists, Rhino Ark and its partners are nurturing a future where community livelihoods and forest conservation go hand in hand.

Along the borders of the South-Western Mau Forest, the indigenous Ogieks have long lived in harmony with nature, drawing on centuries-old traditions rooted in forest stewardship. Central to their cultural heritage is the use of herbal medicine — a practice passed down through generations and deeply intertwined with the health of the forest. As guardians of this vital water tower, the Ogiek play a pivotal role in its restoration and conservation.

In recognition of the value of this indigenous knowledge, Rhino Ark has partnered with Ogiek herbalists to strengthen and modernise their medicinal practices. Through targeted workshops, the herbalists gain essential skills in first aid, health safety, product storage, and marketing. These efforts not only help to safeguard traditional plant-based healing systems but also support the creation of sustainable, forest-friendly livelihoods.

This partnership demonstrates that conservation is most effective when it respects and uplifts local knowledge. By empowering the Ogiek to enhance their traditional practices, Rhino Ark is helping to preserve cultural heritage, promote biodiversity, and improve community well-being — ensuring that both people and forests thrive together.



Sharing indigenous knowledge – a herbalist training session in Molo strengthens community conservation practices.

Ndoinet Beekeepers Farmers' Cooperative registered

The Ndoinet Beekeepers Farmers' Cooperative has been officially registered by the Commissioner of Cooperative Development, signaling a major step in its commercial honey project. This achievement empowers communities living near the South-Western Mau Forest and transforms their livelihoods through sustainable beekeeping.

Since the Ndoinet Participatory Forest Management Plan was launched in August 2023, Rhino Ark and partners have been supporting local beekeepers with improved farming techniques, better market access, and cooperative formation for bulk honey collection and processing.

Through ongoing training and exchange visits, farmers have gained vital skills that position them for sustainable growth. With registration complete, the cooperative is on track to make its first honey sale by the end of 2025.

Building on successes in Eburu and supported by the Rhino Ark / Calgary Zoo Mountain Forest Conservation Partnership, this model is now being replicated across the South-Western Mau ecosystem. Rhino Ark thanks our partners, supporters, and community members whose collaboration is driving both economic empowerment and environmental sustainability.

Eco-tourism lessons for Geta CFA members at Camp Ndunda

Members of the Geta Community Forest Association (CFA) recently toured Camp Ndunda Falls in Embu county for vital lessons in sustainable forest management.

The benchmarking visit, facilitated by Rhino Ark, was part of ongoing efforts to support community-led conservation and eco-tourism development.

The highlight of the trip was the iconic canopy walk, a thrilling experience that gave participants a literal and metaphorical new perspective on the forest. Suspended high

above the forest floor, the walk not only offered breathtaking views but also insight into how eco-tourism can coexist with conservation — generating income while protecting natural resources.

Benchmarking visits like this are powerful tools for peer learning, allowing community members to witness successful models in action. By seeing how Camp Ndunda has built a thriving eco-tourism business grounded in conservation principles, the Geta CFA team gained inspiration, practical ideas, and a renewed vision for what is possible in their own community forests.

Through Rhino Ark's support, communities like Geta CFA are being empowered to explore new pathways that align environmental protection with sustainable livelihoods. By encouraging responsible tourism, eco-entrepreneurship, and community ownership, such initiatives help turn conservation from a challenge into an opportunity.

As the Geta CFA members returned home, they did not just bring back memories - they brought back knowledge, motivation, and a shared goal: to build a future where forests thrive, and the people who protect them thrive too.

Building bridges for biodiversity

A Finnish official visited the Aberdare and Mt. Kenya ecosystems recently to assess the feasibility of establishing a Payment for Biodiversity Services (PBS) scheme in Kenya.

The visit by Tiina Huvio, Executive Director of Finland's Food and Forest Development (FFD), marked an important milestone in exploring innovative solutions to conserve biodiversity while supporting local communities.

PBS schemes are groundbreaking conservation financing models that provide incentives and direct support to communities and stakeholders who actively protect and restore biodiversity. By aligning financial rewards with ecological stewardship, such initiatives foster sustainable conservation rooted in both

environmental and socioeconomic realities.

This visit represents a key step in Rhino Ark's ongoing efforts to develop sustainable, community-centered approaches to conservation finance. It highlights the importance of international partnerships in tackling global environmental challenges and underscores Rhino Ark's commitment to pioneering solutions that benefit both nature and people.

As conversations around PBS evolve, Rhino Ark remains dedicated to building resilient ecosystems through innovative, locally driven financing models that empower communities to be custodians of their natural heritage.



Rhino Ark staff with Tiina Huvio in Aberdares park office.

Riders get road safety and conservation skills



Jean Todt rides with bodaboda conservation champions in the Aberdares.

Eighty-five motorcycle riders from communities bordering the Aberdare and Mt. Kenya ecosystems have been trained on essential skills in road safety and environmental conservation.

The training by Rhino Ark, in partnership with the National Transport and Safety Authority, Kenya Forest Service, and Kenya Wildlife Service, was held at Shamata Gate in Aberdare National Park. It was aimed at transforming Boda boda riders into frontline defenders of Kenya's environment and advocates for safe roads.

It was supported by the UN's Special Envoy for Road Safety, Jean Todt, who donated 1,000 UN-standard helmets. This programme will not

only save lives but also curb illegal activities such as logging, charcoal burning, and bushmeat trafficking — practices often facilitated by motorbike transport.

These newly-trained Conservation Champions play a crucial role in monitoring and maintaining the 400-km Aberdare electric fence, a vital barrier that reduces human-wildlife conflict and protects water catchments serving more than two million people.

This initiative exemplifies how empowering local communities with knowledge and responsibility can create safer roads and healthier ecosystems. Rhino Ark thanked all partners and the riders who will lead the way to a safer, greener future.



A farmer in his avocado farm.



Fruit of the community's labour.

Students' first avocado harvest sign of a greener future

Members of the Nature Conservation Club of Gathirathiru Primary School at Ragati recently achieved an exciting milestone: their first harvest of Hass avocados.

The students celebrated not just the fruits of their labour, but the deeper roots they are planting for conservation and sustainability.

With smiles as wide as the mountain horizon, the students picked around 20 kilograms of ripe, creamy avocados. They shared the harvest - a delicious reward for months of dedication and care. But this was not just about taste; it was a moment that symbolised growth, learning, and the long-term value of environmental stewardship.

Hass avocados, known for their rich flavour and nutritional benefits, are also drought-tolerant and highly marketable. Packed with healthy fats, fibre, and essential vitamins, they offer a sustainable solution for

schools and communities aiming to combine food security, health, and conservation. As the trees mature, they generate income that can support school programmes, enhance food supply, and teach students the principles of eco-friendly agriculture.

The initiative was part of Rhino Ark's wider efforts to integrate environmental education with practical action in schools located near vital forest ecosystems. By helping young learners to grow crops like Hass avocados, the programme is instilling values of responsibility, resilience, and respect for the land - lessons that will bear fruit far beyond the classroom.

As the avocado trees at Gathirathiru continue to grow, so too does a generation of conservation champions. From a few kilos of fruit to a lifetime of awareness, this is where change begins - one harvest at a time.



Avocado fruits in the making.

Sights to behold: Waterfalls





RHINO CHARGE NEWS

Safaricom commits KSh25.8 million to Rhino Charge 2025

Safaricom PLC has announced a KSh25.8 million sponsorship for Rhino Charge 2025 — a bold and forward-looking investment that reinforces its long-standing commitment to environmental conservation and community development. This year's pledge marks Safaricom's largest contribution to the Rhino Charge to date, underscoring the company's unwavering dedication to protecting Kenya's most vital ecosystems — from the towering forests of Mount Kenya and the Aberdares to the rich biodiversity of Kakamega Forest.

In 2025, Safaricom will back two standout teams:

- Car No. 44, led by Safaricom Board Chairman Adil Khawaja, MBS, MGH.
- The EV Explorers, making history as the first all-electric vehicle team to compete in the Rhino Charge.

True to its innovative DNA, Safaricom will also deploy advanced connectivity infrastructure

at the event site, improving digital access, communication, and safety for participants and organizers alike — a powerful example of how technology can drive environmental action.

For more than three decades, the Rhino Charge has been a cornerstone of Kenya's conservation landscape, raising funds for community-driven initiatives such as electric fencing, forest rehabilitation, and ranger support. These efforts have helped safeguard Kenya's water towers, biodiversity, and rural livelihoods.

Safaricom's continued partnership reflects the spirit of collaboration and innovation that keeps the Rhino Charge at the forefront of conservation.

"We thank Safaricom for championing conservation and innovation. Together, we are pushing the boundaries of what is possible — one Charge at a time."

Safaricom pumps KES 25.8 Million towards 2025 Rhino Charge



The new sponsorship marks a significant increase from last year's KES 15 million underlining the Telco's commitment to environmental conservation and community impact.

Sustainability at the heart of Rhino Charge

At Rhino Ark, our commitment to conservation goes far beyond the competition routes and event logistics. One of the most powerful expressions of this commitment is in our robust waste management efforts during the Rhino Charge — a cornerstone of our sustainability ethos.

Every year, Rhino Charge is held in a new, often remote location. From the expansive plains of Kajiado County in 2024 to the rugged terrain of Baringo County in 2025, we carry one core principle with us: respect the land, and leave it better than you found it.

At the heart of this commitment are our waste sorting stations, strategically placed across the venue and run in collaboration with local communities and a team of volunteers. These stations ensure that every type of waste - whether recyclable, compostable, or hazardous- is properly managed and disposed of.

This was more than just clean-up. It was a massive team effort grounded in shared values:

- No trash left behind;
- No compromise on sustainability; and
- 100% community involvement.

By embedding environmental responsibility into every layer of the Rhino Charge, we demonstrate what conservation in action truly looks like. It is about shared stewardship, where everyone - competitors, sponsors, spectators, and community members — plays a role in protecting Kenya's precious ecosystems.

We thank the countless individuals, local leaders, and partners who help us uphold this standard of excellence year after year. Together, we are not just charging through the wild - we are protecting it for generations to come.



Above and below: Waste from the Rhino Charge 2025 venue is sorted and loaded onto lorries for transportation back to Nairobi.



Car 19 and WhiteCap visit the Aberdares

As part of our ongoing monitoring and evaluation efforts, Rhino Ark hosted members of Rhino Charge Car 19, led by captain Petra Somen, along with representatives from their sponsor, WhiteCap, for a field visit in the Aberdare ecosystem.

The visit offered an up-close look at the tangible impact of their support, with key highlights including:

- The 412-kilometre game-proof electric fence, which forms a critical barrier protecting the Aberdares from illegal incursions while mitigating human-wildlife conflict.
- The mega indigenous tree nursery at Geta, showcasing forest rehabilitation efforts that aim to restore degraded landscapes with thousands of native seedlings.

- Community-driven livelihood projects, which promote sustainable development and empower local communities to become active stewards of their natural resources.

This hands-on experience provided a powerful reminder of the deep interconnection between donor support, conservation outcomes, and community resilience.

We were especially grateful to WhiteCap, whose unwavering sponsorship has played a meaningful role in Rhino Charge for three consecutive years, supporting not only Car 19 (The Bushbabes) but also Car 46 (Geco Charges) and Car 25 (The Charging Hippos). Their commitment reflected a growing private-sector engagement in conservation — one that extends beyond race day into real-world impact.



Aberdares local administration plants a tree in support of forest restoration efforts in the ecosystem.



Petra Somen and Sophia community plant a tree in support of forest restoration efforts in the ecosystem.



Rhino Charge Car 19, WhiteCap sponsors, community, and Rhino Ark at the Aberdare rehabilitation site.

Hog Charge raises record-breaking KSh7.6 million

The 26th edition of the Hog Charge, held from January 25th to 26th at Northlands Ranch, Peponi School, set a new fundraising record by raising KSh7,647,920. This exciting mountain bike orienteering competition brought together pupils, parents, and friends from schools across Kenya for a weekend of adventure, teamwork, and endurance. They were all united in support of Rhino Ark Charitable Trust's mission to protect Kenya's vital water towers and endangered wildlife.

This year's event also marked a significant milestone as seasoned driver Mark Tilbury retired after decades of involvement, passing

the torch to his son Robin Tilbury. Over the past 20 years, the Hog Charge Team has raised more than KSh 80 million, fueling key conservation projects that safeguard Kenya's ecosystems. The commitment of Team 35 and the participating schools continued to inspire and drive lasting environmental impact.

Rhino Ark thanks everyone who contributed to this success. The collective spirit and generosity of the Hog Charge community play a crucial role in ensuring the 2025 Rhino Charge event continued to push the boundaries of conservation fundraising and community engagement.



2025 Hog Charge teams at the finish line.

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 once 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:

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🐦 @Rhino_Charge
📘 @RhinoChargeKenya
📺 @Rhino.Charge
📺 @rhinocharge4x4

www.rhinocharge.co.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.

2025 RHINO CHARGE ENTRANTS



TOP 10 RHINO CHARGE FUNDRAISERS



Over 338 million shillings
Adil Khawaja's AK44 Team
(2005-2024) Car 44



Over 209 million shillings
Peter Kinyua/John Macharia
(2000-2024) Car 23



Over 186 million shillings
McKittrick/Ray/Jessop/Bovard/Knight/Smith
(1989-2024) Car 5



Over 108 million Kenya Shillings
Stanley Kinyanjui's Magnate Chargers Team
(2007-2024) Car 62



Over 84 million shillings
Mark Tilbury's Hog Charge Team
(1999-2023) Car 35



Over 66 million shillings
Tim Carstens' Aussie Rules Team
(2013-2023) Car 63



Over 54 million shillings
The Avery's Bundufundis Team
(1996-2024) Car 38



Over 43 million shillings
Eddy Verbeek's Rhino Charge Car No 1
(2000-2024) Car 1



Over 42 million shillings
Mark Glen Team 48
(2005-2024) Car 48



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

THANK YOU!

- **ChallengeAid** - Support to the Schools of Hope (Aberdares)
- **KWS** - Rhino Ark Offices
- **DH-ISLA & Finlays** - Support to the surveillance flights (South-Western Mau)
- **Wilder Institute / Calgary Zoo** - Support to forest conservation / community livelihoods in Eburu Forest
- **Wilder Institute / Calgary Zoo** - Support to forest conservation / community livelihoods / bongo recovery 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
- **Wildlife Conservation Society** - Construction of one wildlife underpass in Imenti Forest
- **Eburru Rafiki** - Support towards community work at Eburu Forest
- **AutoXpress** - Provision of tyres for all Rhino Ark vehicles
- **MPESA Foundation** - Support for the maintenance of Eburu Electric Fence
- **MPESA Foundation** - Support for the construction of the Kakamega Electric Fence
- **Platinum Credit & Platcorp Foundation** - support towards reforestation in South-Western Mau
- **Upper Tana Natural Resources Management Project (IFAD-GoK)** - support towards the fencing of Mt. Kenya
- **BIOPAMA** - support towards the maintenance of the Aberdare fence
- **Darwin Initiative** - support towards the conservation of the Aberdare and South-Western Mau
- **Kenya Pipeline Company** - support towards the fencing of Mt. Kenya
- **UNDP/Government of Japan** - support towards the fencing of Kakamega Forest
- **Horne Family Foundation** - support towards the conservation of the black rhino

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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
KWS Headquarters,
P.O. Box 181 – 00517, Uhuru Gardens, Nairobi, Kenya
Landlines: +254 (0) 20 213 6010/213 6011,
Mobiles: +254 (0) 733 632 460, +254 (0) 724 604 233
Email: info@rhinoark.or.ke
websites: www.rhinoark.org/www.rhinocharge.co.ke

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.
- 2024 Spirit of the Charge film in DVD. Available at KES 1,000 only.
- Rhino Charge 2025 calendar. Available at KES 1,100 only.
- Mau Eburu Guidebook. Available at KES 1,500 only.



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 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 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 (US\$ 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.

Forest-adjacent communities are critical to the conservation of these forests; they are their front-line guardians who are the most directly dependent on the forests and also the most impacted by human-wildlife conflict.



WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED?

- KES 1.6 BILLION (US\$ 16 MILLION) invested in conservation
- 805 KILOMETRES of electric fences built and maintained to date
- 172 FENCE ATTENDANTS maintaining Rhino Ark electric fences full time
- 21 VEHICLES supporting Rhino Ark conservation work
- 85,000 HOUSEHOLDS protected from human-wildlife conflicts
- 178 SCHOOLS providing conservation education
- 570,000 HECTARES of protected areas and water catchments better conserved
- 15 THREATENED SPECIES (mammals and birds) better protected
- 6 FOREST REHABILITATION projects on going
- 2 CORRIDORS for wildlife established

DONATE!

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

We always welcome your kind donations to support our work. Your important 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 (US\$ 25,000). Once built, fences must be maintained continuously and we deploy 174 fence attendants maintaining our fences on a daily basis, supported by eight 4x4 vehicles. Fence maintenance costs KES 80,000 (US\$ 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, seven-man team of community scouts that patrols the Aberdare ecosystem. AJSU targets illegal activities such as logging, charcoal kilns, snaring and wildlife trapping. The team also monitors wildlife abundance and distribution, gathers intelligence information, and participates in forest fire fighting. KES 73,500 (US\$ 735) can cover a two-week field mission.

In Eburu, a five-man Foot Patrol Team responds to local intelligence reports to carry out highly-skilled operations to catch would-be wildlife or forestry criminals. Their main targets are wildlife snares, illegal logging and charcoal kilns. KES 24,000 (US\$ 240) can cover a two-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 (US\$ 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 engagement in forest conservation, adoption of on-farm best practices and improvement of incomes.

HOW TO DONATE

1. Mobile Money

Mpesa Paybill No.: 855995

Account No.: Your name

2. Bank Transfer

Kindly contact us on:

Email: info@rhinoark.or.ke, to obtain the bank accounts

3. Cheques

Please ensure that all Cheques are made out to: RHINO ARK KENYA CHARITABLE TRUST

4. Paypal

Visit our website donations page:

<https://rhinoark.org/donate/>

