

# EXCERPTS FROM RHINO ARK CHARITABLE TRUST ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

## RHINO ARK KENYA CHARITABLE TRUST STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

|                                     | Note | 2021<br>KES         | 2020<br>KES         |
|-------------------------------------|------|---------------------|---------------------|
| <b>INCOME</b>                       | 8    | <u>63,294,760</u>   | <u>189,822,463</u>  |
| <b>EXPENDITURE</b>                  |      |                     |                     |
| Aberdare expenses                   | 9    | 24,093,781          | 51,468,967          |
| Mau Eburu expenses                  | 10   | 13,573,978          | 19,629,452          |
| Mt Kenya expenses                   | 11   | 19,159,916          | 43,712,413          |
| South West Mau expenses             | 12   | 6,817,570           | 16,851,159          |
| Fund-raising expenses               | 13   | 6,329,232           | 28,753,812          |
| Kakamega forest                     | 14   | 4,670,181           | 5,940,026           |
| Other project expenses              |      | -                   | 265,538             |
| Administrative and general expenses | 15   | <u>39,246,970</u>   | <u>47,998,135</u>   |
|                                     |      | <u>113,891,628</u>  | <u>214,619,502</u>  |
| <b>DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR</b>         |      | <u>(50,596,868)</u> | <u>(24,797,039)</u> |

## RHINO ARK KENYA CHARITABLE TRUST STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 MARCH 2021

|                             | Note | 2021<br>KES       | 2020<br>KES       |
|-----------------------------|------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <b>ASSETS</b>               |      |                   |                   |
| <b>NON CURRENT ASSETS</b>   |      |                   |                   |
| Property and equipment      | 3    | <u>12,476,934</u> | <u>19,552,047</u> |
| <b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>       |      |                   |                   |
| Investments                 | 4    | 2,159,612         | 1,988,463         |
| Trade and other receivables | 5    | 11,594,252        | 22,025,567        |
| Bank balances and cash      | 16   | <u>9,702,186</u>  | <u>52,041,896</u> |
|                             |      | <u>23,456,050</u> | <u>76,055,926</u> |
| <b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>         |      | <u>35,932,984</u> | <u>95,607,973</u> |
| <b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>  |      |                   |                   |
| Trade and other payables    | 6    | <u>8,909,625</u>  | <u>17,987,746</u> |
| <b>NET ASSETS</b>           |      | <u>27,023,359</u> | <u>77,620,227</u> |
| <b>FINANCED BY:</b>         |      |                   |                   |
| General fund                |      | <u>27,023,359</u> | <u>77,620,227</u> |

## RHINO ARK KENYA CHARITABLE TRUST NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

### 1. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The principal accounting policies adopted in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below:

#### (a) Basis of preparation

The financial statements summarise the transactions of the Trust and deal with the net assets at the disposal of the Directors. The financial statements are presented in Kenya Shillings (KES), which is the Trust's functional and presentation currency.

The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost basis of accounting except where otherwise stated in the accounting policies below.

#### (b) Income recognition

Donations and Rhino Charge collections are recognised on receipt. Investment income is recognised on accrual basis.

#### (c) Property and equipment

Items of property and equipment are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation. Depreciation is charged on the straight line basis over the estimated useful lives of the assets.

The annual depreciation rates in use are:

|                        |       |
|------------------------|-------|
| Motor vehicles         | 25.0% |
| Furniture and fittings | 12.5% |
| Computers              | 33.3% |
| Office equipment       | 12.5% |

#### (d) Foreign currency transactions

Transactions during the year are converted into Kenya Shillings at the rates ruling at the transaction dates. Assets and liabilities at the reporting date, which are expressed in foreign currencies, are translated at the rates ruling at that date. The resulting differences from conversion and translation are dealt with in the income and expenditure account.

#### (e) Financial instruments

A financial instrument is a contract that gives rise to both a financial asset of one enterprise and a financial liability of another enterprise. The financial instruments held by the Trust are investments in the money market, trade and other receivables, bank balances and cash and trade and other payables.

All the financial instruments held by the Trust are accounted for on amortised cost basis.

#### (f) Receivables

Receivables are stated at nominal value, less provision for any amounts considered irrecoverable.

#### (g) Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash at bank and in hand and short term deposits with an original maturity of three months or less.

#### (h) Use of estimates

The preparation of financial statements requires that management makes estimates and assumptions that affect amounts reported in the financial statements and accompanying notes. Actual results could differ from these estimates. The more significant estimation process is related to the determination of provision for doubtful debts. Although some variability is inherent in these estimates, the management believes that the amounts provided are adequate.

#### (i) Investments

Investments are held in the money market with Old Mutual and Britam asset managers. Interest is earned on a monthly basis from these placements and rolled over as principal.

#### (j) Payables

Payables are stated at nominal value.

### 2. IMPACT OF COVID 19

Following the postponement of the 2020 Rhino Charge, Rhino Ark's main fundraising event, due to Covid-19, Rhino Ark adopted a wide-range of cost-saving measures and embarked on an extensive fundraising programme. This helped sustain Rhino Ark's operations and the maintenance of its legacy projects. However, Rhino Ark had to use the reserve it had built over several years. Rhino Ark, therefore, reported a deficit from operations of KES 50,596,868 (2020: KES 24,797,039) and as at that date, the current assets exceeded its current liabilities by KES 14,546,425 (2020: KES 58,068,180). The Rhino Charge event took place in July 2021 and as of the date of the event a total of KES 81.68 million had been collected by the organization from the fundraisers.

### 3. PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT

|                                 | Motor<br>Vehicles<br>KES | Furniture,<br>fittings and<br>Equipment<br>KES | Computers<br>KES | Total<br>KES      |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| <b>2021</b>                     |                          |                                                |                  |                   |
| <b>COST</b>                     |                          |                                                |                  |                   |
| At 1 April 2020                 | 52,231,074               | 35,929,050                                     | 5,188,904        | 93,349,028        |
| Disposals                       | -                        | -                                              | (42,000)         | (42,000)          |
| At 31 March 2021                | <u>52,231,074</u>        | <u>35,929,050</u>                              | <u>5,146,904</u> | <u>93,307,028</u> |
| <b>ACCUMULATED DEPRECIATION</b> |                          |                                                |                  |                   |
| At 1 April 2020                 | 41,015,109               | 28,390,535                                     | 4,391,337        | 73,796,981        |
| Disposal                        | -                        | -                                              | (13,999)         | (13,999)          |
| Charge for the year             | <u>3,962,211</u>         | <u>2,493,378</u>                               | <u>591,523</u>   | <u>7,047,112</u>  |
| At 31 March 2021                | <u>44,977,320</u>        | <u>30,883,913</u>                              | <u>4,968,861</u> | <u>80,830,094</u> |
| <b>NET CARRYING AMOUNT</b>      |                          |                                                |                  |                   |
| At 31 March 2021                | <u>7,253,754</u>         | <u>5,045,137</u>                               | <u>178,043</u>   | <u>12,476,934</u> |
| <b>2020</b>                     |                          |                                                |                  |                   |
| <b>COST</b>                     |                          |                                                |                  |                   |
| At 1 April 2019                 | 39,064,907               | 35,095,706                                     | 4,616,614        | 78,777,227        |
| Additions                       | <u>13,166,167</u>        | <u>833,344</u>                                 | <u>572,290</u>   | <u>14,571,801</u> |
| At 31 March 2020                | <u>52,231,074</u>        | <u>35,929,050</u>                              | <u>5,188,904</u> | <u>93,349,028</u> |
| <b>ACCUMULATED DEPRECIATION</b> |                          |                                                |                  |                   |
| At 1 April 2019                 | 37,052,898               | 25,679,250                                     | 3,785,817        | 66,517,965        |
| Charge for the year             | <u>3,962,211</u>         | <u>2,711,285</u>                               | <u>605,520</u>   | <u>7,279,016</u>  |
| At 31 March 2020                | <u>41,015,109</u>        | <u>28,390,535</u>                              | <u>4,391,337</u> | <u>73,796,981</u> |
| <b>NET CARRYING AMOUNT</b>      |                          |                                                |                  |                   |
| At 31 March 2020                | <u>11,215,965</u>        | <u>7,538,515</u>                               | <u>797,567</u>   | <u>19,552,047</u> |

### 4. INVESTMENTS

|                                    | 2021<br>KES      | 2020<br>KES      |
|------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Old Mutual Money Market Fund       | 161,967          | 153,133          |
| British American Money Market Fund | <u>1,997,645</u> | <u>1,835,330</u> |
|                                    | <u>2,159,612</u> | <u>1,988,463</u> |
| <b>Movement</b>                    |                  |                  |
| At 1 April 2019                    | 1,988,463        | 1,824,746        |
| Add: Interest earned               | <u>171,149</u>   | <u>163,717</u>   |
| At 31 March 2020                   | <u>2,159,612</u> | <u>1,988,463</u> |

# EXCERPTS FROM RHINO ARK CHARITABLE TRUST ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

## 5. TRADE AND OTHER RECEIVABLES

|                                | 2021<br>KES       | 2020<br>KES       |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Trade receivables              | 3,730,725         | 4,911,911         |
| Prepayments                    | 927,935           | 6,764,089         |
| Other receivables              | 7,545,592         | 10,859,567        |
| Rhino Ark USA                  | 456,013           | 456,013           |
|                                | 12,660,265        | 22,991,580        |
| Less: Provision for bad debts* | (1,066,013)       | (966,013)         |
|                                | <u>11,594,252</u> | <u>22,025,567</u> |

\* The provision for bad debts relates to amounts Rhino Ark USA and customers whose amounts have been outstanding for over a year.

## 6. TRADE AND OTHER PAYABLES

|                | 2021<br>KES      | 2020<br>KES       |
|----------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Trade payables | -                | 3,143,078         |
| Other payables | 8,909,625        | 14,844,668        |
|                | <u>8,909,625</u> | <u>17,987,746</u> |

## 7. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

|                              | 2021<br>KES       | 2020<br>KES       |
|------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Key management compensation: |                   |                   |
| Salaries                     | 15,144,117        | 18,963,432        |
| Pension                      | 240,000           | 240,000           |
|                              | <u>15,384,117</u> | <u>19,203,432</u> |

## 8. INCOME

|                                       | 2021<br>KES       | 2020<br>KES        |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Rhino Charge collections (note 8 (a)) | 19,307,070        | 156,700,761        |
| Other income (note 8 (b))             | 8,891,926         | 15,220,224         |
| Other donations (note 8 (c))          | 33,875,216        | 13,396,513         |
| Interest income                       | 1,220,548         | 4,504,965          |
|                                       | <u>63,294,760</u> | <u>189,822,463</u> |
| (a) RHINO CHARGE COLLECTIONS          |                   |                    |
| Rhino Charge 2020                     | 17,292,070        | 12,800,301         |
| Rhino Charge 2019                     | 2,015,000         | 139,900,460        |
| Rhino Charge 2018                     | -                 | 4,000,000          |
|                                       | <u>19,307,070</u> | <u>156,700,761</u> |

Donations for the Rhino Charge (RC) are booked in the financial year that they were received. As the RC is held in the month of June each year; total 2020 RC donations will therefore be booked in two financial years, that is, the total 2020 RC donations are reflected in 2020 and 2021 financial years. However, since RC 2020 was cancelled, the funds have been credited to the respective chargers for RC 2021.

| (b) OTHER INCOME           | 2021<br>KES      | 2020<br>KES       |
|----------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Bongo surveillance project | 4,270,228        | 7,583,413         |
| Operations base – Aberdare | 2,024,645        | 2,475,695         |
| Miscellaneous income       | 2,583,054        | 5,161,116         |
| Gain on disposal of asset  | 13,999           | -                 |
|                            | <u>8,891,926</u> | <u>15,220,224</u> |

## (c) OTHER DONATIONS

Other donations are monies received from various donors for projects specific to Rhino Ark. In the current year, there were donations received from MPESA Foundation and IDH for South West Mau project, Eburu Rafiki for conservation of Mau Eburu and from Mount Kenya Trust for the conservation of Mt. Kenya and Tusk Trust.

## 9. ABERDARES EXPENSES

|                            | 2021<br>KES       | 2020<br>KES       |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Staff costs                | 5,663,330         | 6,675,545         |
| Other costs                | 3,498,649         | 11,558,575        |
| Fuel                       | 1,245,265         | 1,233,402         |
| Motor vehicles costs       | 1,405,219         | 1,168,665         |
| Tools & materials          | 2,367,657         | 5,986,259         |
| Depreciation               | 1,338,941         | 1,338,941         |
| Community support          | 3,204,513         | 4,601,399         |
|                            | 18,723,574        | 32,562,786        |
| Bongo surveillance project | 5,370,207         | 18,906,181        |
|                            | <u>24,093,781</u> | <u>51,468,967</u> |

## 10. MAU EBURU EXPENSES

|                        | 2021<br>KES | 2020<br>KES |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Staff costs            | 4,117,051   | 5,579,708   |
| Allowances             | 55,035      | 76,396      |
| Community conservation | 1,897,848   | 1,677,999   |
| Tree nurseries project | 764,628     | 300,000     |

|                     |                   |                   |
|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Eburu Rafiki        | 2,894,461         | 2,770,132         |
| Fence costs         | 2,176,972         | 5,990,327         |
| Public relations    | -                 | 81,400            |
| Other costs         | 1,127,773         | 2,777,459         |
| Motor vehicle costs | 540,210           | 376,031           |
|                     | <u>13,573,978</u> | <u>19,629,452</u> |

## 11. MT. KENYA EXPENSES

|                     | 2021<br>KES       | 2020<br>KES       |
|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Staff costs         | 5,584,790         | 6,970,113         |
| Allowances          | 6,855,820         | 13,924,584        |
| Fence costs         | 3,373,822         | 16,535,400        |
| Fire fighting       | 332,948           | -                 |
| Motor vehicle costs | 573,654           | 799,836           |
| Other costs         | 2,438,882         | 5,482,480         |
|                     | <u>19,159,916</u> | <u>43,712,413</u> |

## 12. SOUTH WEST MAU EXPENSES

|                                        | 2021<br>KES      | 2020<br>KES       |
|----------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Allowances                             | 54,164           | 404,509           |
| Depreciation on property and equipment | 670,669          | 670,670           |
| Public relation                        | 188,000          | 523,302           |
| Staff costs                            | 4,267,183        | 5,363,757         |
| Fence and other costs                  | 1,637,554        | 9,888,921         |
|                                        | <u>6,817,570</u> | <u>16,851,159</u> |

## 13. FUND RAISING EXPENSES

|                                     | 2021<br>KES      | 2020<br>KES       |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| General fund raising                | 6,329,232        | 19,233,866        |
| Rhino charge raffle and event costs | -                | 7,829,946         |
| Rhino charge filming                | -                | 1,690,000         |
|                                     | <u>6,329,232</u> | <u>28,753,812</u> |

## 14. KAKAMEGA FOREST

|                    | 2021<br>KES      | 2020<br>KES      |
|--------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Staff Costs        | 3,047,833        | 3,823,625        |
| Vehicle running    | 15,662           | 210,661          |
| Fence construction | 130,575          | 140,209          |
| ESIA               | 172,260          | 461,680          |
| Depreciation       | 1,303,851        | 1,303,851        |
|                    | <u>4,670,181</u> | <u>5,940,026</u> |

## 15. ADMINISTRATIVE AND GENERAL EXPENSES

|                                        | 2021<br>KES       | 2020<br>KES       |
|----------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Depreciation on property and equipment | 3,733,651         | 3,965,555         |
| Bank charges                           | 393,992           | 477,012           |
| Office management and administration   | 29,018,494        | 37,428,064        |
| Auditors remuneration                  | 1,355,893         | 1,484,477         |
| Public relations and press             | 4,071,526         | 3,054,408         |
| Provision for bad debts                | 100,000           | 510,000           |
| Vehicle running expenses               | 573,414           | 1,078,619         |
|                                        | <u>39,246,970</u> | <u>47,998,135</u> |

## 16. CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

Cash and cash equivalents included in the statement of cash flows comprise of the following statement of financial position amounts:

|                        | 2021<br>KES      | 2020<br>KES       |
|------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Cash and bank balances | 6,626,093        | 17,166,416        |
| Call deposits          | 3,076,093        | 34,875,480        |
|                        | <u>9,702,186</u> | <u>52,041,896</u> |

## 17. CONTINGENT LIABILITY

No contingent liabilities have arisen from the activities of the Trust.

## 18. LEGAL FORM

Rhino Ark Kenya Charitable Trust was established in 1991 under an irrevocable trust in accordance with the Laws of Kenya.

## 19. TAXATION

The Trust has been granted exemption from taxation under the First Schedule to the Kenyan Income Tax Act (Cap 470) under Certificate number 20170214/11869 dated 14 February 2017 valid for 5 years.

## 20. CURRENCY

The financial statements have been presented in Kenya Shillings (KES).



2020 has been a year unlike any other. For the first time in Rhino Ark's history, the annual Rhino Charge, which is a main fundraising event was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The cancellation of the Rhino Charge led to a massive reduction in expected core funding. To address this situation, the organisation adopted far-reaching cost-saving measures and revised programme of works with a focus on maintaining legacy projects, in particular the 650 kilometres of conservation electrified fences built to date, and on strengthening our community forest patrols.

Although the pandemic is far from over, some initial lessons have been learned. COVID-19 has highlighted the importance of having a wide and diverse fraternity supporting the organisation's cause. Broadening sources of funding is a critical strategic objective that directors have been pursuing for a number of years to reduce vulnerability to a changing socio-economic environment.

#### Overall funds 2020/21

The total funds raised during the financial year under review were KES 92.61 million. This included in-cash donations amounting to KES 63.28 million (2020: KES 189.82 million) from Rhino Charge, Corporates, individuals and other donors and in-kind donations amounting to KES 29.33 million, from the Government, various corporates and individuals.

Due to COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 Rhino Charge event was postponed and finally cancelled.

KWS covered the costs of the personnel maintaining the 400 km Aberdare Fence and the 215 km Mt. Kenya Fence already built while Kenya Forest Service (KFS) covered such costs for the 43.3 km Eburu Fence. These contributions amounted to KES 25.8 million.

#### Corporate/conservation bodies support

Even though the Rhino Charge did not take place, we received contributions from the following corporate / conservation bodies who Rhino Ark would like to thank:

- M-Pesa Foundation for donating KES 3.1 million for tree nurseries project;
- Calgary Zoo for donating KES 1.9 million in support of the conservation of the Mountain Bongo antelope;

- Eburu Rafiki for donating KES 2.48 million in support of grassroots education outreach. This includes funds from African Fund for Endangered Wildlife (AFEW) amounting to KES 1 million, KES 0.69 million from Florensis Kenya, KES 0.79 million from The Safari Collection and several other donors;
- IDH Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH) for donating Euro 12,555 for the activities at South West Mau Forest Reserve;
- Wildlife Conservation Society for donating USD 44,955 for addressing human-wildlife conflicts (building of elephant grids) in the Imenti Forest;
- Elephant Cooperation, through the Bill Woodley Mt Kenya Trust, for donating USD 18,000 for addressing human-wildlife conflicts (building of elephant grids) in the Imenti Forest;
- Platinum Credit for donating USD 29,264 for the establishment of micro-fences and replanting of 10 hectares of degraded forest in South Western Mau Forest Reserve;
- UNEP-African Elephant Fund for donating USD 37,000 towards addressing the illegal killing of elephants in the Imenti Forest;
- Tusk Trust Limited donating USD 50,000 for forest security and salary support at Eburu & Aberdares and donating USD 46,767 for a community fire-fighting brigade and community conservation champion programme at Mau Eburu Forest;
- Rare Species Conservatory Foundation for donating USD 40,000 in support of the conservation of the Mountain Bongo antelope.

In-kind contributions were also made by corporates in support of the Trust and the Rhino Charge, and the contributors of KES 3.29 million are detailed here below:

- Gallagher Power Fence Systems: KES 1.04 million;
- Fire extinguishers donated: KES 0.28 million;
- Flamingo Horticulture Kenya Ltd: KES 1.018 million;
- Dedan Biogas Ltd: KES 0.48 million;
- James Finlays (Kenya) Ltd: KES 0.469 million.

#### Wider Mau Eburu conservation

Close engagement with forest edge communities continued to be a cornerstone of Rhino Ark's conservation approach. Communities are directly benefitting from sustainable livelihood initiatives support.

The biogas project has seen 57 farms install biogas units and transition out of charcoal and firewood as their main domestic energy sources. These farmers are also benefitting from the use of bio slurry (a biogas by-product) as an organic fertilizer for use on their farms and kitchen gardens. The training received by the farmer groups and their practical experience were also shared with groups in neighbouring counties.

Rhino Ark supported training of farmers on water harvesting systems to address

the perennial problem of surface water availability. From this training and logistical support, 16 farms have so far built water pans with dam liners. This initiative is contributing to improved farm productivity.

Rhino Ark, with support from KENCHIC Ltd. introduced forest edge farmers to the hardy KENBRO chicken breed and provided training and ongoing technical support. The Eburu Fruit Farmers, one of the community groups, has grown their initial stock of 100 chicks at inception in 2019 to 1,440 birds to date.

Rhino Ark, organizes regular training modules for farmers on fish, poultry, dairy and pyrethrum farming, as well as organic farming methods, fertilizer use and marketing. The training sessions are conducted by experts from the agriculture ministry and from the private sector. Benchmarking trips (Karura Forest/ governance, and Lengetia Farm, Naro Moru (best practices) have also been organized for selected famers' groups.

Rhino Ark has teamed up with the Calgary Zoo through the Mountain Forest Conservation Partnership to conduct surveys as part of continued support to the communities surrounding Eburu Forest towards establishing a commercial grade honey production facility. As part of this process, a total of 1,083 community beehives have been accurately mapped within the forest using GIS.

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in Kenya, the team has recorded an increase in illegal forest activities at Eburu Forest. This challenge has been met with an increased work effort through forest foot patrols and intelligence work. The collaboration between the Bongo Surveillance Project, Eburu Rafiki, Kenya Forest Service, Kenya Wildlife Service and Calgary Zoo and Rhino Ark has greatly improved forest security. Monitoring of mountain bongo and other wildlife in the forest has been ongoing through a grid of 13 active trap cameras.

Maintaining the Eburu Electrified Fence is a continuous process that requires deep commitment by a dedicated 12-man team backed up by the fence technical committee. An upgrade of the 43.3km long fence was undertaken involving the installation of "W" plastic insulators on all plastic fence posts, thereby increasing voltage by up to 2 kilovolts.

Landslides in Eburu Forest cut off over 20,000 community members from water access, damaging three water infrastructure systems on which they rely. Rhino Ark facilitated assessment of what is required to restore these critical water systems in Kahuho and Ole Sirwa.

#### South Western Mau ecosystem

Rhino Ark's community conservation work initiated in 2017 has resulted in communities benefitting from honey production training in 2018/19 enabling the development of conservation-based livelihoods amongst the community. A review of the beehives inventory in the

community is ongoing, with 592 hives recorded so far. Rhino Ark continues to provide technical support to the beekeepers.

An initiative to develop a forest herbal products business programme is underway. An initial training module was conducted for 16 interested community members.

Our robust community conservation programme continued to grow, with regular community outreach meetings held. Among the target groups has been local churches, and this approach has been effective. With Rhino Ark support, eight churches across the landscape have each established tree nurseries as livelihood initiatives and to support forest rehabilitation. The churches are instrumental in providing a platform to reach the wider community.

Despite the interruption occasioned by Covid-19, the schools conservation education programme continued with 46 local schools participating. Our sustainable energy programme, embedded within 15 local schools, progressed well. The schools are effectively using energy saving Jikos (stoves) and charcoal making kits for cooking, thereby reducing their fuelwood consumption by up to 50%.

Nine community members across the ecosystem have been recruited into the conservation champions' programme. These champions received relevant conservation and sustainable livelihood training and took lead in local Rhino Ark conservation work. Their contributions were recognized by other partners who often requested them to assist in their conservation activities.

Snaring of wildlife in the expansive South Western Mau Forest was an ongoing challenge, as well as logging and charcoal burning particularly in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. Towards mitigating these challenges, Rhino Ark participated in regular joint forest patrols with Kenya Forest Service rangers, three community scouts and Conservation Champions.

Under the aerial surveillance programme, Rhino Ark coordinated two flights during the reporting period. All key stakeholders participated in the flights, including a member of the Judiciary. The surveillance flights are an invaluable tool in enhancing forest protection, and provide a critical forum for key stakeholders to collectively address forest security threats.

In collaboration with Kenya Forest Service, Rhino Ark continued to maintain 40 hectares of rehabilitated forest at Kipkoris outpost along the eastern forest boundary. A team of three community scouts carries out spot weeding, seedling infilling, and prevention of livestock grazing at the site.

#### **Mt. Kenya fencing project**

A milestone in the construction of the Mount Kenya Electric Fence has been reached with the signing of a funding agreement for the Mt Kenya Fence amounting to KES 267 million. This includes the construction of 60 km of comprehensive fence; three energizer

houses; 20 gates; four elephant grids; and two years of maintenance. This is the largest single funding ever secured by Rhino Ark.

Despite the economic impacts of Covid-19, fence construction continued, albeit at a slower rate. 215 kilometres of the 450 kilometers comprehensive fence that will eventually encircle Mount Kenya have been completed. However, the fence construction was relocated to build a 10 kilometre fence between the forest reserve and Mount Kenya Wildlife Conservancy. The fence requires regular maintenance and, to that end Rhino Ark and KWS has a team of fence supervisors and fence attendants that monitor and fix the damages to enable the full functionality of the electric fence built so far in Mt. Kenya.

With the support of the Wildlife Conservation Society and the Elephant Cooperation, Rhino Ark started building two elephant grids at Ruiri and Kithoka in the Imenti Forest to prevent elephants from exiting the forest through the main road. In addition, Rhino Ark secured support from the African Elephant Fund to build a low fence with outriggers parallel to the main electric fence, in an area where fence breakages by elephant had become a major challenge. 23 kilometres of low fence have been built.

Rhino Ark, Mount Kenya Trust, Mount Kenya Conservation Forum and the Kenya Forest Service have joint efforts towards taking advantage of the current rains to replant former commercial forest plantation areas and degraded natural forest areas. Community involvement in the exercise makes them own the initiative and, in the end, they help in nurturing the growth of the trees and protect the forest zones. Degraded forest areas were replanted in Ontulili, Gathiuru and Kabaruru forest stations

#### **Aberdares ecosystem**

Protecting the precious but fragile ecosystem of the Aberdares needs constant fence maintenance to deter poachers, illegal loggers, and charcoal burners and forest encroachment but largely to protect forest-adjacent communities from marauding wildlife. Rhino Ark continued financing the maintenance of the 400-km-long Aberdare fence, as a priority area.

Fence maintenance is one of the areas of responsibility of the Aberdare Trust, and among the financing options for Rhino Ark is the partnership with Powering Africa-Recharging Conservation (PARC). PARC creates technologically innovative and economically viable solutions to open up access to clean energy and secure long-term funding for conservation projects that protect the environment and promote climate change resilience in rural areas in Africa. PARC, in turn, secures funding from investors who are not just driven by financial returns, but also wish to provide long-term funding for conservation. Two potential hydro-power projects of 7.8 and 6 MW have been identified in the landscape that could generate substantial revenue for fence maintenance.

With support from Tusk Trust, Rhino Ark strengthened the operations of the community scouts of the Aberdare Joint Surveillance Unit (AJSU). Founded in 2010, this partnership between forest-adjacent communities, Rhino Ark, Kenya Forest Service and Kenya Wildlife Service, sought to involve more actively forest-adjacent communities in conservation efforts. Today, the Unit is at the forefront of conservation. Fully trained and equipped, AJSU carries out many tasks, including: forest patrols, detection of illegal activities, arrests, destruction of charcoal kilns and marijuana crops, and removal of snares and traps. AJSU also conducts regular assessment of the status of the 400-kilometre-long fence around the Aberdare ecosystem.

The heavy rainfall in 2020 led to numerous landslides destroying 2,195 kilometres of fence. Despite this challenge and the prevalent financial constraints caused by COVID-19, Rhino Ark succeeded in repairing these damages and ensuring the continuation of the protective functions of the fence in these areas.

With the support of Agricultural Extension and Marketing Services, a forest mulcher was imported to Kenya to clear firebreak in the Aberdares and Mt. Kenya. A trial run of 3 kilometres was made that demonstrated the efficacy of the equipment.

#### **Bongo Surveillance Project (BSP) successes**

Rhino Ark remains a key partner and supporter of the Bongo Surveillance Project, raising the bulk of the funds for the project and seconding a conservation education officer to the project.

USD 40,000 was received during the year from Rare Species Conservatory Foundation. The funds go towards collecting vital information about the Bongo, patrols, removal of snares and spear traps, as well as to the dynamic Bongo wildlife school outreach programmes under BSP.

#### **Thousands to thank**

It is always difficult to express gratitude to all who deserve a vote of thanks in a report like this. Rhino Ark has thousands of donors in Kenya and friends overseas who support the home-grown and home-driven conservation initiative. I wish to especially mention the Chargers, some of who were able to secure and remit sponsorships to Rhino Ark despite the cancellation of the Charge event.

I thank all of you for your generous support.

I wish to especially thank the Rhino Charge Committee and the huge band of volunteers who planned two different charge venues in the hope that the 2020 edition of the event would take place.

#### **Peter Kinyua**

Chairman, Board of Directors, 2021