

#### A LETTER FROM OUR CHAIRMAN, PHILIP COULSON

Dear Friends, Supporters, Partners, Colleagues,

What can I say about 2021? For us all, in whatever sphere of life, it was an extraordinary and unprecedented year. Nevertheless, OI Pejeta remained resolute to the many challenges that it faced both internally and more so from externally.

Now looking back on that year I feel that we have weathered the storm and that is thanks to the whole host of individuals, partners, visitors and of course, and arguably most importantly, our staff. I believe we have emerged as a stronger organisation.

I want to single out our staff. We were compelled to reduce staff salaries at all levels during the lockdown – I fully appreciate the impact that had for each member of staff and indeed their families. Thankfully, we were able to restore all staff to full pay by July 2021.

In view of the enormous personal sacrifices made, I would like to dedicate this annual report to all of our staff. We salute you.

We faced many struggles during the year, tourism and livestock income were down but we got through it. We had a change in senior management during the year. Richard Vigne retired after a quarter century at the helm of OI Pejeta and we will always remain grateful to him for his leadership, passion and vision. We wish him well in his future endeavours.

Prior to the appointment of our new CEO, Justin Heath, OI Pejeta was ably managed by our interim management team comprising of Moses Muthoki (Chief Operations Officer), Joseph Kariuki (Chief Finance Officer), and Ken Kimani (Chief Commercial Officer), who provided invaluable support to the organisation and Board. I thank each of them most sincerely.

I am delighted that we have a new CEO, Justin Heath, in place. I think it is fair to say Justin has hit the ground running. Justin shares our key passions for conservation and community social economic development, and we all wish him well. I am confident Justin is the right man for the job. He has our support.

Thank you to each and every one of you for all that you do to support OI Pejeta Conservancy – without you we would not be the exemplar conservancy that we have become.

I look forward to catching up with you next year to review the 2022 financial year and I wish each of you health and happiness in the coming year.





# OL PEJETA: A ROLE MOD



## Green List

**Protected | Conserved Areas** 

**2014 | 2018** 

(CONTINUOUS)



## **2017**

TOURISM FOR TOMORROW

Community Award



## 2012

**Private Conservancy of the Year** 

### 2015

**Private Conservancy of the Year** 

## **2016**

**Private Conservancy of the Year** 

## **2017**

Ecowarrior Award (Overall Winner)

Private Conservancy of the Year SDG8 - Decent Work and Economic Growth SDG15 - Life on Land



## **Z018**

Africa's Leading Conservation Company



20

Leaders in Respo

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Responsible To Judge's Award f Achiev

20

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20

Best Wildlife Initiative in

## EL FOR CONSERVATION

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**17** Onsible Tourism, Ommended

**17** urism Awards, for Outstanding ement

**20** urism Awards, for Outstanding ement





#### **ZD18**

Best Stand in Research and Development
Best Medium Trade Stand

#### 2019

Best Stand in Innovation and Invention
Best Stand in Energy Services and
Conservation Achievement



#### **Z016**

Reserve Champion Junior Bull
Reserve Champion Heifer
Winner Heifer Under Two Years Old
Champion Pen of Three Heifers
Winner Pen of Three Four Teeth Steers
Reserve Champion Pen of Three Steers
Champion Steer
Reserve Champion Boran Bull
Reserve Champion Beef Breed Bull

#### **2018**

Stockman's Trophy

Supreme Champion Bull
Supreme Heifer

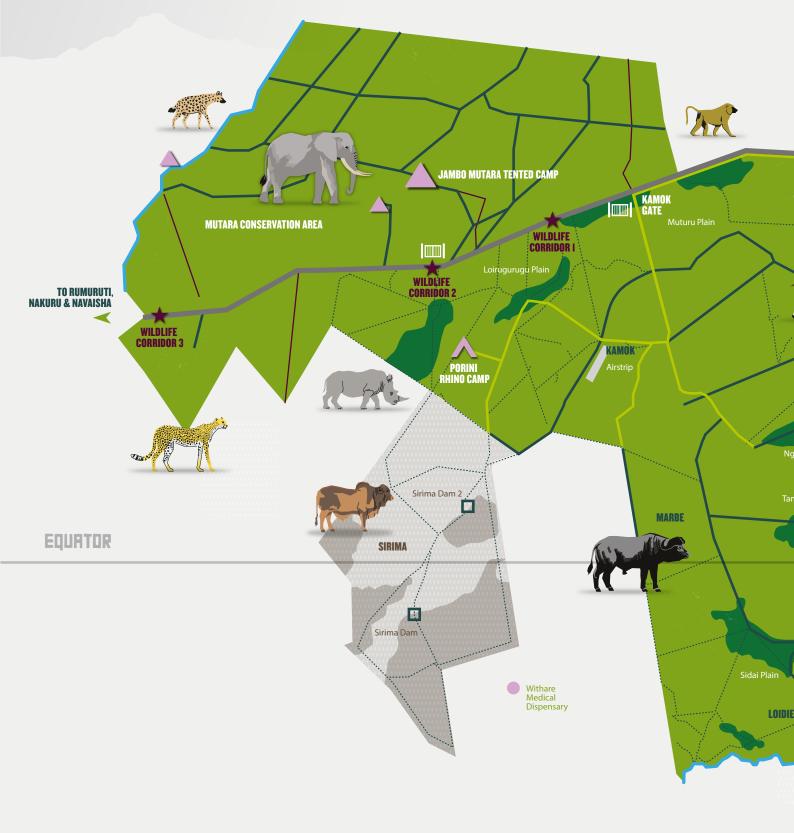


**Z1** Conservation East Africa





2022 2022



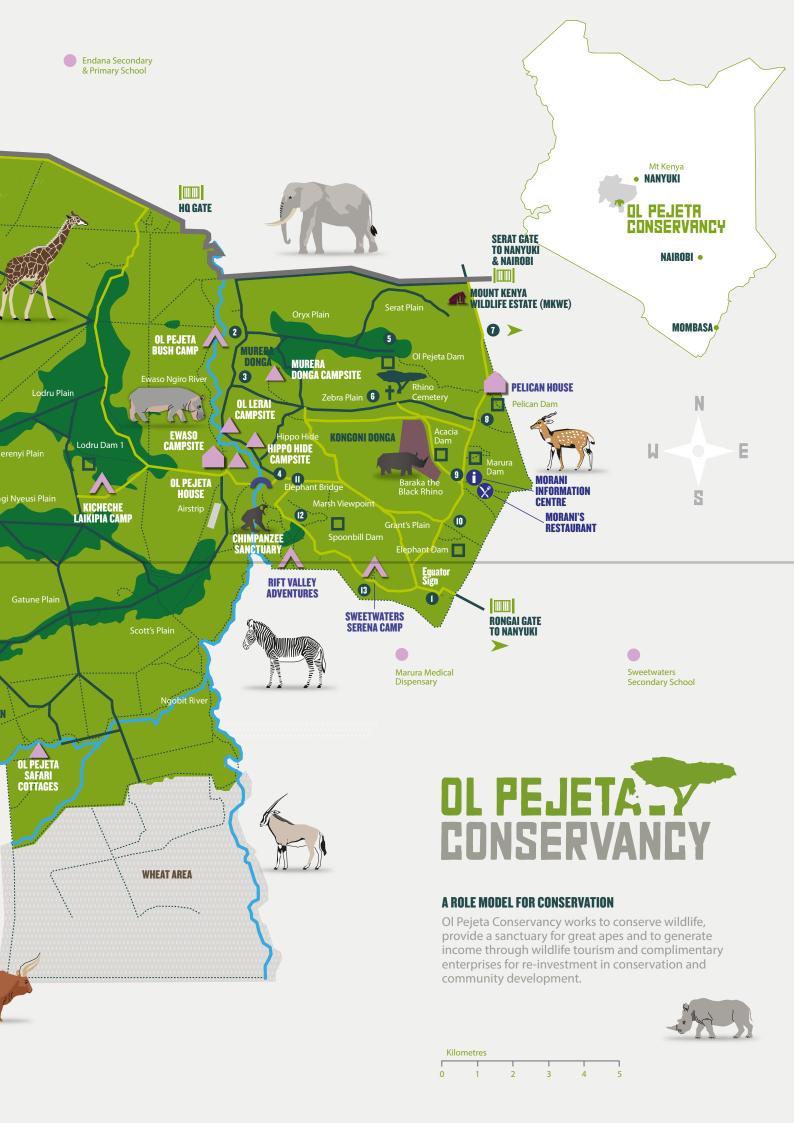
#### DISCOVERING OL PEJETA CONSERVANCY AND MUTARA CONSERVATION AREA





**MOUNT KENYA WILDLIFE ESTATE (MKWE)** 





# CONSERVATION

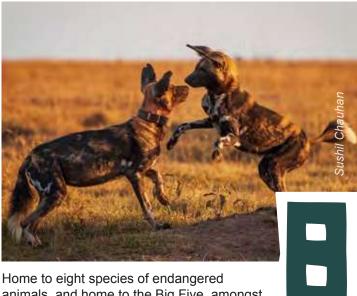


Created eight more embryos of the functionally extinct NWR. This brings us to a total of 13 embryos and that much closer to a northern white rhino calf.



We are thrilled to have marked this incredible milestone of 150 black rhinos thanks to our dedicated,

hardworking and brave teams. We are now the largest population of the eastern black rhino in the world and in 2021 celebrated our fourth consecutive year of zero poaching.



Home to eight species of endangered animals, and home to the Big Five, amongst a variety of bird species and other animals.

**4**TH

Consecutive year of no-poaching thanks to the efforts of our over 150 rangers.







Completed a health check conducted on all our chimpanzees. The examinations are done every three years to determine the health status of our rescue chimpanzee population.





33,070 animal passed across our wildlife corridors. These corridors play a vital part in linking OI Pejeta to the greater Laikipia ecosystem and allow free movement of wildlife in search of food and calving grounds as the seasons change.



We joined the Laikipia Conservancies Association, whose mandate is to develop and oversee a connected and well-managed Laikipia landscape that conserves nature and improves people's lives.



# AGE RHINGS

OL PEJETA HAS NOW REACHED ITS MAXIMUM RHINO POPULATION. AND IS EXPANDING TO MUTARA.

Thirty years ago, only 20 black rhinos roamed OI Pejeta Conservancy - then called the Sweetwaters Game Reserve. Three decades, over 200 rhino rangers, eight canines, and a 120km perimeter fence later, we have reached an incredible milestone of 150 black rhinos and oh - what a journey it has been!

Most of Laikipia was made up of cattle ranches back in the 1940s. By the 1960s, the impact of hunting was grave across the country, and megafauna, such as elephants and rhinos, saw their numbers plummeting. According to IUCN, the black rhino population had declined by a staggering 97.6% between 1960 and the 1990s, primarily due to poaching. Concerned by the diminishing population, the previous owner, Lonrho Africa, decided to turn OI Pejeta into a wildlife conservation area in 1988.

In 1993, 20 black rhinos were introduced to OI Pejeta from other areas. At the time, it was estimated that only 2,300 black rhinos were living in the wild globally. It was clear that OI Pejeta, similar organisations across Africa, and the government had a long road ahead if they were to recover the species from possible extinction.

When we introduced rhinos to OI Pejeta, their biggest threat was poaching. There was, therefore, a need to invest in security measures to stop poachers from getting in, and the rhinos from getting out into dangerous territories. Among the measures were:

#### **Fencing**

Ol Pejeta has a 120-kilometre electric perimeter fence that helps keep our

wildlife, especially the rhinos, safe. Our rangers patrol it daily to ensure there are no intrusions or breakages. To allow for the movement of other migratory animals, we have two corridors, a series of short fence posts erected three feet above the ground, that animals use to get in and out of the Conservancy. One is 180 metres long and the other 35 metres. The corridor's design is such that all wildlife except rhinos can pass through it. This is to keep the rhinos within the protected area, and enable wildlife like elephants, other herbivores and carnivores to migrate.

#### The anti-poaching unit

This unit comprises eight canines and 36 armed rangers who are also national police reservists. The reservists are certified by the national police body to assist the

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regular police in maintaining law and order. We introduced the unit in 2011, and it is one of the first private conservancy dog units in Kenya. The dogs are certified by the police, and their testimonial (albeit not verbal) is recognised as final in a court of law.

The team works under rough and uncertain conditions patrolling our fenceline every night - not sure what the night will bring. Their primary function is to respond to threats against wildlife, but they are also highly involved in supporting our communities with security concerns. They regularly assist local authorities tracking and arresting criminals in cases ranging from petty theft to livestock raiding. This has helped

tremendously in developing a good relationship between OI Pejeta and surrounding communities and fostered a deep appreciation for conservation.

In 2021, 12 puppies were born to bloodhounds Otis and Stacy. The puppies underwent three months of training after which eight joined security teams in Mugie Ranch, Lolomarik, Loisaba, and Ol Jogi conservancies. The puppies that remained on Ol Pejeta - Jo, Shuga, Sara, and Diego - have started going on patrols after their successful training.

#### **Scarf retired**

Five-year-old female bloodhound, Scarf, retired from active duty in 2021 and has moved to a loving private home. She had been with the OI Pejeta K9 unit since 2016 and worked as a tracker dog. The job requires high fitness levels as sometimes the team tracks scents for many kilometres. Scarf helped our team respond to hundreds of cases in our communities and within the Conservancy and is a true wildlife hero. We wish her a happy life in her new home.

#### The rhino patrol rangers

Our rangers are the heartbeat of our conservation efforts. Rangers walk up to 20 kilometres every day to ensure that each rhino is sighted - they must be physically sighted at least every four days. They are usually the first line of monitoring to detect security threats, fence breakages, and/or wildlife in distress.

In 2021,18 of our rangers attended a refresher training course on wildlife law and policing in Kenya, crime scene management, criminal justice, foot and arm drills, bush craft and survival tactics, rhino identification, and monitoring. We are thrilled to share that Simon Nakito won the Best Ranger overall and Beatrice Nashagin received the Best Female Ranger in Drills during the Community Rangers' training organised by the Kenya Wildlife Service.





Simon came to OI Pejeta in 2016 as an intern after showing interest and love for wildlife conservation. In 2017, he was hired as a radio room operator, receiving alerts from the ground and relaying important messages to management teams. As a ranger, Simon encounters many dangers. He recalls a time when a black rhino named Roberto charged him during a routine patrol and he luckily escaped unharmed. His favourite part of his work is participating in rhino translocation and notching exercises.

"Our milestone of getting to more than 150 (rhino) individuals feels like a special achievement. It shows conservation and protection of rhino populations is possible when we all collaborate closely. The sacrifice that our rangers display not even money can buy." Says Simon.

Simon is currently our Wildlife Database Administrator - an important role that keeps a record of our rhinos, new births, mortalities, and all key details of each rhino on Ol Pejeta.

#### **MEET BEATRICE**

Beatrice grew up in Mutara, a neighbouring community to OI Pejeta. She joined the OI Pejeta team in 2014 and is now one of our most experienced wildlife rangers at the Conservancy.

Along with a very dedicated team of about 100 wildlife monitoring rangers, Beatrice's role in the Conservancy is an important one and involves her regularly going into the bush to check on the health and wellbeing of our rhinos. She tells us of a day when a buffalo charged at her and other rangers, where her bush craft training saved her life.

"I get so excited every time we discover a new rhino calf. Reaching 150 seemed so ambitious when I first came to OI Pejeta, I am so happy that we have reached that number. It motivates me, even more, to do my work and keep each rhino here safe." Beatrice says.



## Combined, our ranger teams responded to 135 human/wildlife conflict cases, 41 community security concerns, and eight intrusion alerts in 2021.

In 2014, OI Pejeta was awarded recognition under the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas. The list certifies OI Pejeta as effectively managed and fairly governed, with a long-term positive impact on people and nature. The certification is a global standard evaluated against a set of demanding criteria.

The Kenyan Government has greatly contributed to the positive state of rhino conservation on OI Pejeta. At the height of poaching in 2013, it passed the Kenya Wildlife Conservation and Management Act. The law served to deter wildlife crimes by handing out stiff penalties and prison sentences. There has been a considerable decline in poaching incidents since then, and in 2020, Kenya recorded zero rhinos poached for the first time since 1999! Our rhino patrol rangers and anti-poaching unit work closely with the Kenya Wildlife Service in keeping off perpetrators, arresting, and testifying against them to ensure that any injustice towards wildlife is handled within the law.

We are thrilled to have marked this incredible milestone of 150 black rhinos. We currently have the largest population of the eastern black rhino in the world. A deep congratulations and gratitude to our dedicated, hard-working and brave teams, as we also celebrated our fourth consecutive year of zero poaching.

With this success comes a new challenge. Black rhinos, by nature, are very territorial. Adult males occupy a range of between five to seven kilometres. Old and younger males who cannot defend themselves are often injured or killed whenever they cross an adult male's territory. Ol Pejeta's carrying capacity is estimated at 120 black rhinos - we exceeded this capacity by 30 rhinos by the end of 2021. Our next biggest hurdle in ensuring continued growth in rhino numbers is to secure additional safe habitat for them. We are working with various partners and authorities to secure new rhino habitat (Mutara Conservation Area) and support greater connectivity across the Laikipia ecosystem.



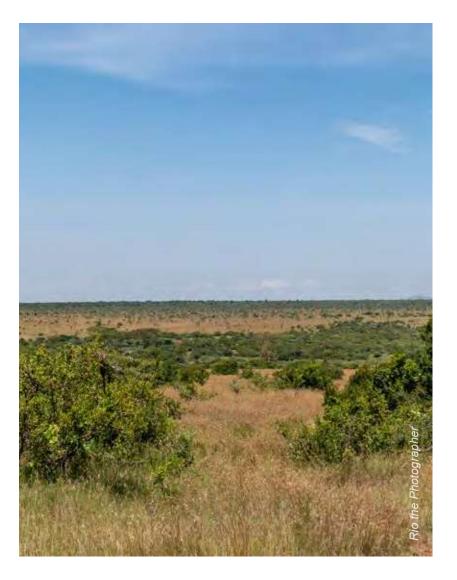
#### **OUR RHINO HABITAT EXPANSION PLAN: MUTARA**

Over the last few years, we have worked with our local communities, conservation partners, and county and national government to prepare the 20,000 acre Mutara Conservation Area as a possible location for additional rhino habitat.

We made great strides in 2021 thanks to the United States Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, Wild Landscapes International, and other partners, and are several steps closer to being ready for the big move. We have created an 18-person team comprising armed rangers, senior commanders, and medics, who attained their certifications at the Kenya Wildlife Service Law Enforcement Academy. We have also added nine Kenya-police-certified canine unit handlers to help protect the wildlife that will settle on Mutara.

We are now working on recommendations shared by the Kenya Wildlife Service before we can move rhinos to the area, among them: an upgrade of our 20km short fence to a tall fence, improving the road network to enhance enforcement patrol efforts, conducting an environmental social impact assessment, and lastly to establish a 200m corridor that links Mutara to OI Pejeta Conservancy. We are also closely engaging community leaders on the impact of moving rhinos to this area to them, and how they can continue to benefit from rhino conservation.





## CREATING HABITAT CONNECTIVITY - THE LAIKIPIA CONSERVANCIES ASSOCIATION

As we seek to expand the habitat available for our rhinos and other wildlife, we recognise the need to work in collaboration with neighbouring conservancies and communities. We have created an environment for the wildlife populations to thrive, and for this success to continue, we have to find ways to give them more space and allow them to migrate safely.

It is for this reason, among others, that the Laikipia Conservancies Association was formed. The Association constitutes 24 community and private conservancies aimed to address common challenges and amplify impact at a landscape level. Together, we are guardians of over 3,500km² of land rich in biodiversity and wildlife - a huge responsibility! We hope that by combining our efforts, we can become a force in conserving our ecosystem while contributing to a thriving local economy.

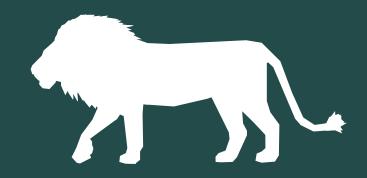
We are excited and proud to be part of this movement and look forward to the milestones we will achieve as a collective.

#### PREDATOR MONITORING AND MANAGEMENT

Ol Pejeta holds some of the highest predator densities in Kenya, the most common being lions and hyenas. We also have small populations of leopards, cheetahs, jackals, caracals, and the bat-eared foxes. We currently have 82 lions, nearly 100 hyenas, 10 elusive leopards, and 15 cheetahs.

As a conservancy, we must monitor the impact of predators to inform appropriate conservation and management actions. We do this by keeping track of their population performance - growth, survival, demographics, analysing their trends, distribution, interactions, prey, and habitat preferences. Keeping an eye on this data not only helps us ensure that species like rhinos are not under threat, but also helps us manage human-wildlife conflict.

Predators play a big role in regulating herbivore populations which in turn helps balance the pasture availability. They are also a favourite among our visitors on safari!



#### FRIENDS IN THE SKY

Fun fact! The heaviest flying bird on Ol Pejeta is the Kori bustard, while the largest is the martial eagle.

Often unnoticed, OI Pejeta's skies are rich with thousands of birds - we have 318 confirmed species! We are a permanent home to 193 species while the other 125 visit us in different seasons.

Birds play various roles in the OI Pejeta ecosystem. More than 70% of all flowering plants depend on birds to disperse their seeds. Species like vultures help clean up by consuming predator leftovers while predatory birds regulate populations of other birds, small mammals, fish, amphibians, insects, and reptiles like snakes and lizards. Some birds, like the oxpecker, have symbiotic relationships with certain animals; they get readily available nutrition from herbivores, while helping the herbivores avoid parasite infestation.

The next time you are on Ol Pejeta, don't forget to look up. You might just notice a friend in the sky that you have never seen before!

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BIRD SPECIES ARE FOUND ON OL PEJETA

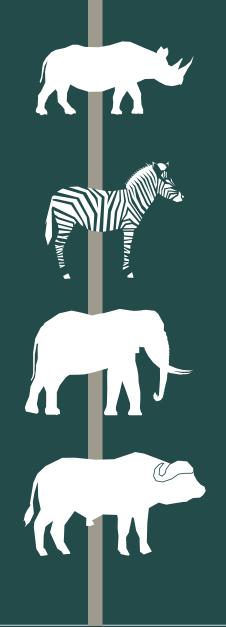




#### **ECOLOGICAL MONITORING UNIT**

The Ecological Monitoring Unit (EMU) team ensures that we hold a dynamic wildlife population in suitable, contiguous, and healthy habitats. They also monitor wildlife movements through our corridors to optimise connectivity with the greater Laikipia ecosystem. With the continued aim for innovative, tangible, and sustainable conservation for wildlife and people, in 2021:

- We participated in a rhino audit conducted by external accredited rhino monitoring personnel from the Kenya Wildlife Service, Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, and Ol Jogi. The audit verified the number of rhinos in the protected area.
- We engaged the African Rhino Specialist group for the final review of the Southern White Rhino Conservation and Management Action Plan
- We attended the third quarter Association of Private and Community Land Rhino Sanctuaries (APLRS) meeting in support of the national rhino programme. The programme ensures all stakeholders are aligned in achieving the national objectives on rhino conservation.
- We, in conjunction with the Zebra Project, undertook a rapid assessment of the numbers and demography of the zebra population. This is a ground-truthing effort on an observed gradual decline from the annual aerial censuses.
- We partook in the analysis and reporting of the national wildlife census
   the Laikipia/Samburu chapter.
- We conducted a ground count of herbivores and estimated a herbivore density of 57.32 animals/km². We discovered that buffaloes had the highest density, closely followed by the plains zebras and Thomson's gazelles.





#### **VETERINARY INTERVENTIONS**

In 2021, the OI Pejeta veterinary team led by Dr. Ngulu attended to various injured wildlife and performed the following interventions:

- Translocated two female southern white rhinos, the potential northern white rhino surrogates, into the teaser bull's enclosure to allow the team to determine their cycle and the best time for embryo transfer.
- Treated a sub-adult female Grevy's zebra who sadly later died. An autopsy revealed a hole on the wall of her stomach that allowed stomach contents to enter the abdominal cavity which led to her death.
- Sedated Malaika, a female K9 Unit bloodhound, to remove a tumour in her leg.
- Treated a lioness who had been injured during a fight between two prides.
- Treated a kudu at Loisaba Conservancy that was suffering from foot and mouth disease.
- Vaccinated the anti-poaching K9 Unit against parvovirus, DHLP and rabies.
- Captured and moved a lone adult lion from a wheat farm to the conservation area.
- Attended to a sick elephant at Mpala Research Centre who sadly had to be euthanized.

#### **SWEETWATERS CHIMPANZEE SANCTUARY**

#### Our chimpanzees' forever home

The Sweetwaters Chimpanzee Sanctuary was established after a rescue centre in Burundi had to be closed due to the civil war outbreak in 1993. Many of the chimpanzees were rescued from cramped and unnatural living conditions, and arrived with horrific injuries sustained from abuse at the hands of humans. We currenly have 34 chimpanzees at the Sanctuary, which is their forever home. Here, they have made friends and live in a safe and natural environment.

#### **Surviving the pandemic**

Chimpanzees share 98.6% of their DNA with humans. They are therefore susceptible to an array of diseases common to people. COVID would be devastating for our chimpanzees and therefore we have taken strict protocols to protect them. These guidelines remained in place in 2021. Caretakers have remained in isolation, away from family and friends for weeks at a time, and following quarantine measures whenever they interact with external parties.



#### **Comprehensive health checks**

The team at our Sanctuary conducted a comprehensive health evaluation on all our resident chimpanzees.

It was quite an achievement for us to do this during a pandemic, following safety guidelines, as it requires extensive planning and expertise. We performed the exercise together with experts from the University of Minnesota, University of Nairobi, Kenya Wildlife Service, and other volunteer wildlife veterinarians. The overall objective of the health check was to establish the health status of all chimpanzees by performing comprehensive reviews of organ system functions and collecting appropriate samples for basic laboratory and molecular evaluation.

Additionally, we replaced and placed contraception implants on all the females mature enough to breed. We try to avoid breeding because our mission is to provide care for rescued chimpanzees who can never return to the wild, rather than to increase populations. By not allowing breeding, we can ensure enough space and resources to provide lifelong care to orphaned, destitute chimpanzees in need of a home. However, we allow for when by blessing a chimpanzee is conceived and born.

Thank you to the Arcus Foundation for funding this vital exercise, and a huge congratulations to Dr. Ngulu and his team for completing the health checks successfully.







## We are heartbroken to have lost three of our chimpanzees last year;

**AMIZERO** 32-year-old Amizero - who we fondly referred to as Ami, came to Ol Pejeta from the Jane Goodall institute in Burundi. She had been rescued from a residence dehydrated, thin, and critically ill.

Over the years at Sweetwaters, Ami's social skills and wisdom saw her rise through the ranks and become one of the most respected females in the clan at the Sanctuary. She had a gentle spirit, got along well with others, and was often the one maintaining peace between feuding chimps.

We were all saddened to see her fall ill in January due to cardiopulmonary complications, to which she eventually succumbed a few weeks later. We will miss her peaceful nature and are thankful to have been her final home.

**J080** Our beloved baby Jobo was born on the Conservancy in 2018 to Angela. He made our hearts melt as he explored the Sanctuary, full of curiosity about his home.

A year after his birth, his mother died from acute bacterial pneumonia, leaving young Jobo with no maternal figure to protect or teach him about surviving in a chimpanzee society. We introduced him to a foster mother named Cheetah, and he was slowly starting to understand how to live with the others. Unfortunately, he got caught up in a fight when one of the dominant males attempted to mate with Cheetah, and he sadly sustained fatal injuries.

**BARAN** Four-year-old Baran came to the Sanctuary from Eram Zoo in Iran in 2021 for a chance to start a new life with fellow chimpanzees.

Baran was beloved across the globe, and we were all hoping she would find happiness at Sweetwaters and live like a chimpanzee. At the time of her death, she was going through a process of integration with other chimpanzees at the sanctuary. Sadly the integration didn't go as planned, and she sustained severe injuries from some of the other chimpanzees. Despite the caregivers responding immediately and all efforts to save her, she succumbed to her injuries.

Over the years, we have successfully integrated 22 chimpanzees into the Sweetwaters Sanctuary and have a large family living here on Ol Pejeta. Their care, safety and happiness are our priority, and we work closely with PASA and GFAS to ensure our protocols and standard of care are in line with recommendations.





# NORTHERN WHITE RHIND RECOVERY

## THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN THE NORTHERN WHITE RHINO PROGRAMME WRITTEN BY THOMAS HILDEBRANDT AND STEVEN SEET

After a challenging year tackling the effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic, in 2021 the international BioRescue consortium was able to return to OI Pejeta to continue the northern white rhinoceros recovery programme. In March, July, and October 2021 the team from the BioRescue consortium conducted harvests of oocytes, immature egg cells, from the two females, Najin and Fatu on OI Pejeta Conservancy.

More than doubling the number of stored embryos awaiting implantation in a southern white rhinoceros surrogate mother is just one piece of good news from the programme: on top of that, two of these embryos are different from the previous ones and therefore especially valuable. Following the oocyte collections in July and October, the BioRescue scientists were able to use the thawed semen of northern rhino bull

adds the genetics of a completely unrelated individual to the cryopreserved population. All previously produced embryos were from the semen of northern white rhino bull Suni, who died of age-related causes on OI Pejeta Conservancy in 2014.

The addition to the genetics of the future northern white rhino population was shadowed by the potential loss of another. In the fall

"More than doubling the number of stored embryos awaiting implantation in a southern white rhinoceros surrogate mother is just one piece of good news from the programme: on top of that, two of these embryos are different from the previous ones and therefore especially valuable."

These three procedures marked the fifth, sixth, and seventh successful oocyte collections in the programme and yielded a record of 59 oocytes. With these oocytes, the in-vitro fertilisation specialists were able to create eight pure northern white rhino embryos that are now stored in liquid nitrogen, along with the five embryos created in earlier procedures.

Angalifu for fertilisation for the first time. Angalifu lived in San Diego and died in 2014. His sperm was previously thought to be incapable of successfully fertilising eggs. However, after conducting a sperm viability test using different batches of pig oocytes, the scientists were able to identify viable sperm which enabled them to create another first-grade embryo. This excellent result

of 2021, following a special indepth ethical risk assessment, the BioRescue team decided to cease egg harvesting on 32-year-old northern white rhino Najin, whose collected oocytes could never be successfully fertilised. While attempting to save the northern white rhinoceros from extinction through advanced assisted reproduction technologies, the team places the



highest value on respecting the life and welfare of the individual animals involved. This decision leaves the ambitious programme with just one female that can provide oocytes: Najin's daughter Fatu. Weighing up risks and opportunities for the individuals and the entire species rendered this decision without an alternative. This situation will further strengthen the need for stem cell-associated techniques, which are also part of the BioRescue mission,

as well as long-term biobanking. Najin will remain an important part of the mission as an ambassador for her kind and by transferring social knowledge to future offspring.

While successfully continuing the oocyte collections and embryo production, the preparation for the next crucial step of the mission has begun on Ol Pejeta. The sterilised southern white rhino bull, Owuan, has got acquainted with two southern

white rhino females, who are potential surrogates for the northern white rhino embryos. Owuan's mating with these females has been carefully monitored over the second half of the year in order to determine the exact cycle and the ideal moment for transferring embryos into the surrogates. A moment that might be just around the corner...

#### **RECOVERING THE HARTEBEEST**

Ol Pejeta's ecological monitoring team has spent the last 15 years collecting data on the exact predation pressure facing the Conservancy's hartebeest to continue with the efforts towards their recovery.

Hartebeests roamed parts of North Africa and the Middle East in plenty for the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. There are estimated to be around just 360,000 hartebeests existing in over 25 African countries, including Kenya. The Bubal subspecies were extinct in 1994, while the Tora subspecies are listed as Critically Endangered. Many remaining species are confined to protected areas - their decline was attributed to hunting and habitat encroachment.

Today, the main threat facing hartebeests in Kenya is human pressure on their habitat and diseases. Ol Pejeta is home to an estimated 180 Jackson's hartebeests, a hybrid between the Coke and Lelwel subspecies. Our team conducts monthly counts and is actively taking steps to grow the population. We do this by:

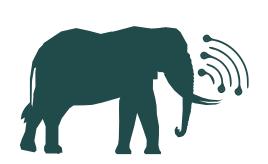
- Pushing herds into predator-free areas to encourage breeding
- Clever placement of cattle bomas to shift lion hunting to locations with a focus on zebra
- Manage stocking densities of other species and grazing pressure by other herbivores within the predator-free enclosures

We have also been studying the diseases and internal parasites transferred between herbivores to understand how to prevent and help defend against transmission. We hope that by using this wealth of data, we can change the course for the hartbeest on OI Pejeta and across the continent.





# TEGH IN CONSERVATION



# CIO100 AWARDS

#### **AWARDS**

We are thrilled to have received the silver mark at the 13th edition of the CIO100 Awards. The awards highlight organisations for their achievements in technology innovation. Ol Pejeta, in particular, was recognised for our innovation in tech to protect wildlife and respond to human-wildlife conflicts.

#### **OUR CONSERVATION TECHLAB**

In 2019, we opened a conservation tech lab to accelerate the research, development and implementation of conservation-led technology solutions.

#### **SMART** monitoring

To effectively monitor and protect our wildlife and environs, we operate field-based teams deployed in three sectors across the Conservancy. They conduct regular patrols and respond to wildlife threats or incidents affecting neighbouring communities. Over the years, their ways of monitoring have involved the physical collection of data followed by manual input. This method amounts to errors and delays of up to a week from initial observation.

Thanks to a grant from The Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management Programme (BIOPAMA), we were able to introduce digitisation into the process in 2021. With their support, our rangers were deployed with the equipment and skills to enable them to collect accurate data. Our field teams are now able to report events in real-time. By the end of 2021, we were able to make 50% of data collected in the field available for management decision-making within a 24hr period.





#### **Using Solar to guard and protect**

Our anti-poaching rangers now have consistent and sustainable access to electricity - thanks to the GivePower Foundation.

We installed a 4.7KWp solar system to power our anti-poaching unit base 24/7. The solar panels not only power the rangers' houses but are also integral for security operations including communication and lighting the K9 Unit. Previously, diesel generators provided power to enable communications between the field teams and the radio room, but we had frequent downtimes. The rangers' houses were not powered and were totally dark. Solar provides green energy and also ensures the stability of the network. This will improve security operations to keep our wildlife and communities safe.



#### Sustainable water production using hydropanels

In 2021, the GivePower Foundation, in partnership with Climate Real Impact Solutions and SOURCE, installed ten hydropanels at OI Pejeta Conservancy through the Solarisation Project. Hydropanels can extract clean drinking water from the atmosphere, powered entirely by the sun. Each hydropanel can create an average of two to five litres of drinking water per day. They last up to 15 years and, in their lifetime, can eliminate the use of 54,000 single-use plastic water bottles!

This could not have come at a better time. Water resource management is at the forefront of everyone's attention after poor rains and rapidly drying rivers. Our water needs are extensive; for the wildlife, cattle, people, and communities that depend on the boreholes, dams, and rivers to survive.

These ten hydropanels will provide sufficient clean drinking water for the anti-poaching unit base that accommodates a team of 65. All panels are remotely connected to SOURCE's Network Operations Centre, allowing them to monitor the panels' productivity, and troubleshoot any potential issues. The app that comes with the installation lets users monitor water quality, reservoir levels and receive alerts when the panels need a service. Data collected is recorded to predict the future productivity of the panels.

Eventually, we aim to upscale this project by installing more hydropanels on the conservancy, supplying tourists, communities, and staff members with sustainably produced drinking water.

#### We are optimising water use

In 2021, we deployed five smart water meters in key water points, as identified in the Water Master Plan developed in 2019. The smart water meters were deployed through the Conservation Technology Lab in collaboration with Liquid Intelligent Technologies. The meters are ultrasonic, meaning they rely on sound waves to determine the velocity of a fluid, the velocity is in turn used to calculate the volume of the water flowing across the meter.



The digital water meters are now a means to help us optimise water use around the Conservancy as they enable us to get water volume readings remotely. The water volume readings are transmitted wirelessly through the Sigfox network to a

cloud platform that is integrated to Earthranger; our chosen protected area management software. This reduces the manpower needed at various points of installation, and helps us react faster to supply needs.



#### We went live with Kifaru Rising

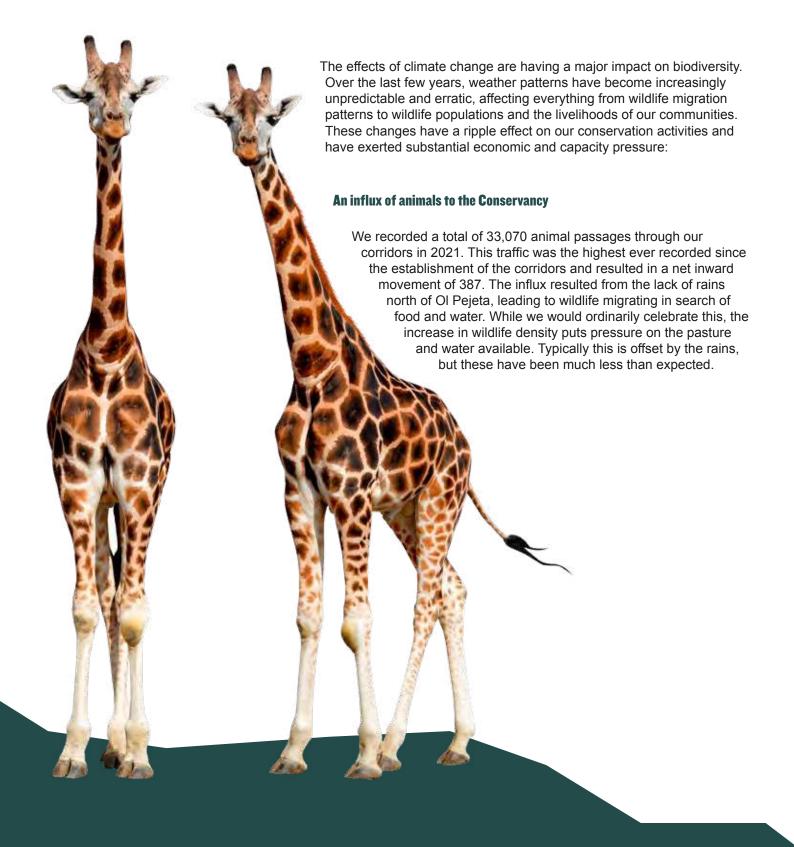
We installed thermal imaging cameras to improve intelligence and greater monitoring along our fenceline. This system of cameras is able to differentiate people, vehicles, and wildlife which is crucial in helping the security teams know the best response mechanism, whether it's an intrusion of concern, human-wildlife conflict, or something else. Data-driven decision-making will save time, resources and improve overall response.

"The convergence of different technologies like thermal imaging, fibre, microwave, solar photovoltaic, through the multi-stakeholder partnership by WWF, FLIR, CISCO, KWS and OI Pejeta in the 'Kifaru Rising' project provides an unprecedented ability to combat poaching and human-wildlife conflict," says OI Pejeta's Head of Technology, William Njoroge.





# CONSERVATION AND CLIMATE CHANGE





#### **Broken water pumps**

Ol Pejeta has man-made dams and watering holes that ensure wildlife can access water. These usually fill with water from the rain, and when it's dry, we pump water from boreholes. The influx of animals and lack of rain meant we have had to pump water a lot more frequently into storage tanks. Often, excessive pumping leads to breakage of the pumps and failed boreholes.

#### Fence breakages

Water pumps take some time and are costly to repair, but consistent access to water and food is necessary for animals. When these are not available, wildlife will look for it elsewhere. The closest other sources of water and food are in the communities around us. Wildlife will resort to leaving the Conservancy to access water and food, and in the process break the fencelines. Fence breakage is especially common with elephants because they are not as deterred by the fence voltage.





#### Increase in human-wildlife conflict

Wildlife leaving the Conservancy by breaking the fences almost always ends up in community farms or residential areas. We attribute many of the human-wildlife conflict incidents to the influx of wildlife into OI Pejeta and consequently breaking into the community. Our team, with help from the Kenya Wildlife Service, responded to 135 cases of human-wildlife conflict.

#### Supplemental feeding of endangered species

The failed rains compromised the food and water available in the predator-free enclosures where our endangered species like the northern white rhinos and the Grevy's zebras live. We regularly had to supplement with hay, increasing our operations costs. In some cases, other herbivores found a way into the enclosures for the more readily available food. This has put immense pressure particularly on our Grevy's population management efforts as they are more prone to nutrition-related complications.





## H SUSTRINABLE CONSERVATION MODEL

THOUGHTS BY EVA KIMANI, OL PEJETA'S PROJECT DEVELOPMENT LIAISON AND ALUMNI OF THE SCHOOL OF CONSERVATION AT THE AFRICA LEADERSHIP UNIVERSITY

Increased global population and industrialisation continue to exert pressure on finite resources, yet these same environmental resources are critical to achieving a diverse wildlife economy and ensuring quality livelihoods through ecosystem services.

The IUCN defines ecosystem services as the benefits people derive from ecosystems. It states that despite the ecological, cultural, and economic importance of these services, the ecosystems and the biodiversity that underpins them are still being degraded and lost at an unprecedented scale. This is because we, humanity, underestimate the economic value of ecosystems to our welfare.

To achieve this, in 2021 we:

- Conducted conservation education to over 3,000 beneficiaries through Conservancy complimentary visits, conservation education teacher training, and outreach programmes.
- Provided 417 community members with improved cooking stoves that contribute to the reduction in the use of fuel wood, and hence reduce deforestation, through our renewable energy programme.
- Distributed 600 lion lights to communities to help reduce cases of wildlife predation on livestock, thus reducing the loss of both wildlife and human lives.

- practices to help reduce the effects of land degradation caused by overstocking.
- Introduced bee-keeping as an alternative livelihood enterprise to help promote an increased population of pollinators that contribute to food production and security.

Our projects in community areas also seek to enhance biodiversity in the contiguous landscape to scale the conservation of natural resources beyond just protected areas. It will ensure that wildlife habitats are conserved across the landscape and continue to benefit the communities from ecosystem services.

### We, humanity, underestimate the economic value of ecosystems to our welfare.

It is in line with this that we pegged our vision - to become an innovative and sustainable development model that conserves biodiversity (particularly endangered species), while contributing to the economic growth of rural communities.

OI Pejeta supports approximately 35,000 people living around its borders. We ensure that wildlife conservation translates to better education, healthcare, and infrastructure for the next generation of wildlife guardians.

- Provided 4,000 farmers with technical support for sustainable agricultural practices such as conservation agriculture, water harvesting, and good soil health practices.
- Planted 9,000 tree seedlings in various schools and riparian areas to help reduce the degradation of riverine areas.
- Provided technical support to 430 households in sustainable fodder production and livestock

Nobel Peace Prize award winner, Wangari Maathai once said, "You cannot protect the environment unless you empower people, you inform them, and you help them understand that these resources are their own, that they must protect them."

It is paramount that conservation creates tangible value for communities. It helps develop a sense of ownership and eventually translates to sustainable use of natural resources.



## OUR NEIGHBOURS

A core part of our mission is the need for reinvestment into our communities to ensure that they share in the benefits of conservation. They are our partners in conservation, and our first line of defence against poachers and external threats. We work with them to develop programmes that address their needs. Among them are education, digital literacy, health, creating sources of income, and building infrastructure for sustainable energy.



# EDUCATING COMMUNITATION ROUND PROTECTED AREAS

CONSERVATION'S BENEFIT ON THE EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES OF OUR NEIGHBOURS. BY IAN MUIRURI

Education is at the core of our development work, even when it is not directly related to schools and learning. In the last decade, OI Pejeta has helped build over 50 classrooms, libraries, computer rooms, and other learning infrastructure. As a result, several

most critical areas of support for our focal community areas.

Today, nearly a third of all the schools in Laikipia county have benefited from Information and Communications Technology (ICT) integration which has resulted in:

We have an estimated 35,000 people in our communities. Over half of them are youths, many of whom are students. This provides a concise rationale for directing resources to education projects. Many households are in the low-income bracket and rely on rain-

"The overarching objective of supporting education is to develop local skills in the community, chart a clear path in poverty reduction and prevention, and instil a culture of conservation as a component of formal and informal education"

schools have been rehabilitated and improved from a series of semi-permanent - and sometimes dangerous - structures, to permanent modern classes with furniture.

Every four years, our community development team carries out a Social Assessment of Protected Areas survey (SAPA), and each time, education outreaches have been the

- 75% of beneficiary schools introducing ICT as an examinable subject
- Over 270 students choosing to study ICT at a national level
- Digital integration in classrooms going up by 50%
- Digital literacy growing by 32%

dependent agriculture. Because of climate factors and economic challenges, not the least of which has been the recent pandemic, many parents cannot pay fees for their children.

Cognizant of the close interaction between community school children and the Conservancy, we always keep our gates open for local



schools and youth groups who do not pay an entry fee to come into the Conservancy. In 2021, 6,756 visited as part of this programme. We have, additionally, created a conservation education programme and have a dedicated conservation education officer. The programme has enabled us nurture conservation clubs in community schools, and engage in restoration and reforestation

work with community youths. The overarching objective of supporting education is to develop local skills in the community, chart a clear path in poverty reduction and prevention, and instil a culture of conservation as a component of formal and informal education. Many children around the Conservancy share resources such as land and water with the wildlife. We invest in their

education because we know they are the next generation of conservation guardians. Every day we learn from them, and we are confident that as they grow into opinion shapers and decision-makers in their respective communities, they will challenge and improve development, conservation, and community work.

#### **NEW DORMITORY TO ACCOMMODATE 120 STUDENTS**

We opened a new boarding school in our local community, Mwituria, through a partnership between private donors, the private sector, and the Government that will accommodate 120 students.

It is the only boarding school in a 15km radius, which means more children in the local area can access education as a result of this project. By widening the catchment area, and by removing a long journey to school, OI Pejeta and our partners have helped to improve the lives of local children for generations to come. Not only does this improve the student's productivity during school hours, but it also protects them from the perils they face on the way to school.

"Our students have for years spent a lot of time walking long distances to school," said Boarding Master - Robert Githaka. "Sometimes this can be unsafe, cause distractions, and makes them quite tired by the time they get to class. Thanks to OI Pejeta and Corteva, they can now focus on achieving their education goals."



#### ROLLING OUT CONSERVATION EDUCATION THROUGH TEACHER EMPOWERMENT

41 community teachers successfully completed training on conservation education for school activity plans. This was a collaboration between The Giraffe Conservation Fund (GCF), San Diego Zoo, Twiga Walinzi, and Ol Pejeta Conservancy.

The four-day hands-on training included discussions on the status of the environment in Laikipia - home to OI Pejeta - understanding the different habitats and wildlife, and capacity building for running successful environmental clubs.

The teachers visited the Conservancy which gave them an immersive experience that empowered them with the resources and knowledge to help them tailor environmental management into their students' learning activities.

Future generations are key to ensuring the preservation of wild spaces.





#### **Digital Literacy**

218 teachers were trained on the use of the Africa Ruggedized Education Solution (ARES) boxes, Google Classroom, and basic IT skills in lesson delivery through seven workshops organised by OI Pejeta and AFRETECH.

The ARES box is essentially a server, loaded with educational resources and designed to operate in remote environments. It is resilient to intermittent power surges, dust, heat, can run for over six hours on its battery, and connect with up to forty Wi-Fi-connected devices – such as notebooks, tablets, and smart phones.

In addition to training, we donated: 100 notebooks, five ARES servers, five projectors, and five pairs of speakers to four schools and one vocational college in Laikipia.

Digital literacy will help the beneficiaries meet the minimum global standards as they prepare for the job market and consequently access opportunities to support their communities.

#### **Providing access to safe water**

We marked World Water Day by partnering with Well Aware to provide access to clean water to two schools in the OI Pejeta community - Tigithi Boys Secondary school and Sweetwaters Girls Secondary School. The students and teachers had been relying on unsafe water from shallow wells contaminated by nearby latrines, causing widespread illnesses within the school and severely affecting students' health and education.





#### **Creating livelihoods for a thriving community**

A flourishing community allows for people to care for the surrounding environment. With the basics taken care of, they can start addressing the well-being of wildlife. We aim to ensure that conservation benefits go to our immediate community first and foremost.



97% of the workforce on OI Pejeta is Kenyan, and 70% of those are from the local communities around us. Further employment is created by hiring local casual workers. In 2021 alone, we had over 450 people with temporary contracts.

We are also the biggest taxpayer in the region. This is important as conservation is then recognised as an important economic use of the land.

In addition to formal employment, we source groceries consumed at our restaurants and accommodation properties from community groups to provide a ready market for their farming.





## TOURISM

Tourism is the primary economic driver in the country and for OI Pejeta. It has been our main source of income, providing financial independence and sustainability for our operations. Tourism revenues are the anchor to our conservation and community development efforts. Pre-COVID, OI Pejeta hosted an average of 110,000 local and international visitors annually, contributing more than two-thirds of our income.

We started 2021 hopeful that the uncertainties of the pandemic would soon be behind us, but sadly quickly discovered that this was not to be. In March, to mitigate the rapidly growing cases of COVID-19, the government declared another inter-county lock down - halting travel again.

To say it was devastating is an understatement. We had just started welcoming guests after over nine months of quiet. The halt in travel and pausing of some activities like the behind-the-scenes visit to the Chimpanzee Sanctuary continued to strain our day-to-day resources.

Thankfully after two months, the lockdown was lifted. However, even though local and international guests trickled in over the rest of the year, they were only 50% of the numbers we saw in 2019. We are happy that things are looking up, but we are still quite far from getting back to where we were. Despite these challenges, we soldier on to ensure OI Pejeta is open to tourism for local and international visitors and to continue our efforts and commitment to the environment and our neighbours.

#### **CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES**





## STRY DY OL PEJETR

CAMPING

PELICAN HOUSE

THE STABLES

SWEETWATERS SERENA CAMP

OL PEJETH HOUSE (UNDER CONSTRUCTION)

OL PEJETA BUSH CAMP

PORINI RHINO CAMP

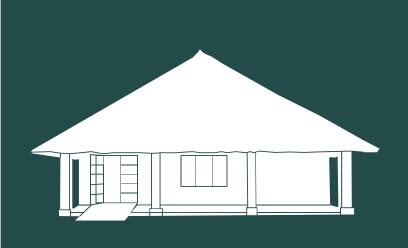
KICHECHE LRIKIPIR CAMP

JAMEO MUTARA TENTED CAMP

OL PEJETH SAFARI CUTTAGES

SANCTURRY TAMBARARE





#### **WE OPENED A NEW VISITOR CENTRE**

We developed a new welcome centre at the main gate to provide a dedicated space to receive and interact with our guests as they arrive on Ol Pejeta.

Funded by The Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management Programme (BIOPAMA), the centre has been equipped to handle arrivals and departures more efficiently so that our guests can start their "wild" experience faster.

#### WE WERE RECOGNISED AS THE BEST WILDLIFE CONSERVATION INITIATIVE IN KENYA

We are excited to have been named by LUXLife Magazine as the Best Wildlife Conservation Initiative - Kenya for The 2021 Travel & Tourism Awards. The awards aim to recognise those who have dedicated themselves to offering the finest experiences, products, and services in the industry. This announcement comes amidst a period where we have missed seeing all of you enjoying the experience that is OI Pejeta, and we truly cannot wait to see you back through our gates again.



A BIG thank you to all of you for putting us on the map!



#### OUR IMMERSION CONSERVATION EXPERIENCE

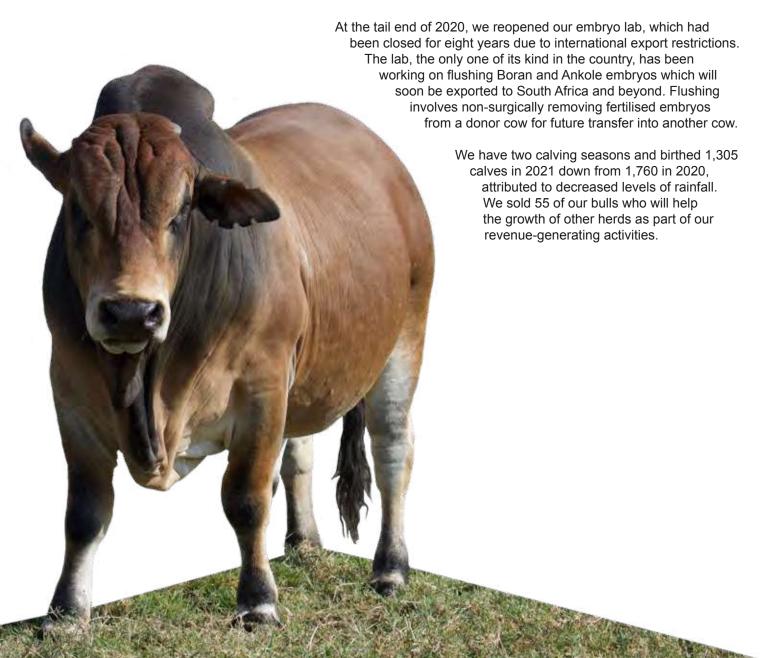
Previously known as our volunteer programme, the Immersive Conservation Experience is fast gaining interest. It is a fully integrated and immersive programme that allows participants to get behind the scenes and learn about conservation and community. It is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to experience the Conservancy from the perspective of the people that protect wildlife each day.

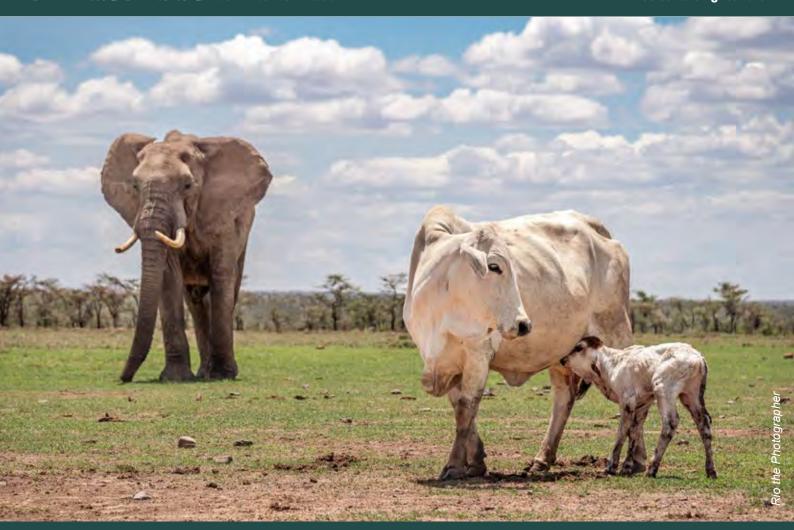


## LIVESTOCK AND HGRIGULTURE

OI Pejeta operates a unique model of conservation. It involves wildlife-livestock integration and agricultural activities. Alongside tourism, it is critical to supporting our day-to-day operational costs.

We have the world's largest herd of Boran cattle - and they all graze in the wild under the watchful eyes of herders. At night, the cattle are herded to predator-proof enclosures (bomas). Over the years, we have proven that not only can livestock and wildlife live on the same land, but that it also has ecological benefits. Cluster grazing breaks the hard soil during dry seasons and allows for fertilisation. These areas become rejuvenated and produce a lot of healthy pasture for other herbivores. We also graze a herd of 241 Ankole cattle - you may recognise them from their large horns - using the same model.







#### **CONSERVATION AGRICULTURE**

#### **Honey farming**

The number of our beehives declined from 150 in 2020 to 50 in 2021, massively reducing our honey production to just 60 kilograms. The main reasons for the reduced beehives are:

- Theft of bee hives
- Destruction by wildlife such as elephants
- Destruction by ants

Sadly, due to the pandemic refocusing our priorities, our bee keeping suffered terribly. However, we have learnt many lessons from the failures and will hopefully increase production in 2022.

#### **Hay production**

Despite a decrease in hay production due to the reduction in rainfall, we managed to supplement the endangered species enclosures during the dryer seasons to provide nutrition to our vulnerable species.



# R CONSERVATION LEGISLAND L

#### A FEW WORDS FROM RICHARD VIGNE, WHO LEFT OL PEJETA IN 2021 AFTER 28 YEARS

I took over OI Pejeta at the ripe young age of 28. At the time, it was a somewhat defunct cattle ranch with a small game reserve called Sweetwaters, a new chimpanzee sanctuary and, if I remember correctly, somewhere in the region of 20 black rhinos. As you might imagine it was a dream come true for a young person passionate about a life in the bush, and recently qualified with an MBA from Cranfield University. The owners at the time, Lonrho Africa, left me largely to my own devices and the conservation potential of the property, as well as the greater Laikipia region. soon became obvious.

From a tourism perspective our focus at the beginning was on the 30 bed Sweetwaters Tented Camp; it was a pretty run down place, badly in need of investment and we had no idea at that time of its potential to make money for the company. Beyond that, we spent many years recovering the depleted cattle herds, expanding the area under arable farming and developing a programme for the consumptive use of wildlife, an activity that was permitted by the Kenya Government in those days. The programme entailed buying wildlife quotas from all over Laikipia, supplying game meat to restaurants in Nairobi, as well as zebra skins to

South Africa for "hair-on" tanning. It is worth remembering, unthinkable as it may be now, that it was normal in that era for wildlife to be removed from areas to "make way" for cattle. We spent many long hours hunting down and dispatching any lions that had turned into cattle killers, and in the monthly log their removal was reported under a column entitled "vermin"!

Gradually the financial fortunes of the company recovered, but it soon became obvious that Lonrho wished to sell. Initially this was to be through a process of subdivision, but we managed to make the argument that this would create an ecological disaster in a region fast emerging as one of the remaining strongholds for endangered wildlife in Kenya, with a good deal of negative publicity attaching to the company as a result. Ultimately, in 2004, with the help of various organisations including Flora and Fauna International, we were able to attract a significant investment from a US philanthropist by the name of Jon Stryker. This allowed us to secure the property and start to make the investments necessary to create Ol Pejeta Conservancy.

And all in all I think we did a pretty good job. When I started, OI Pejeta

used to receive around 15,000 visitors per year; pre-COVID our numbers had swelled to 115,000 spread across 230 beds and nine camps, with over 50% of those visitors being Kenyans taking time to enjoy their national heritage. By the time I left, our black rhino population had swelled to over 150, making it the largest single population of this species in East and Central Africa, and we had become famous for our work to try and save the northern white rhino from extinction.

We achieved all of this using an integrated approach to land management that allowed us to ranch the largest (and best) herd of pure Boran cattle in the world, across the same land as our wildlife, including a population of close to 100 lions. Much misunderstood, at least in the early days, this integrated approach made us productive and profitable, reduced our reliance on philanthropy, enabled us to employ upwards of 1,000 people (all in), made us one of the biggest taxpayers in the region and demonstrated a new way to achieve "conservation" where biodiversity could be maintained even as we attended to the economic and social needs of humans. This will be the route to conservation success in the future.



## "The planet is in desperate need of new thinking that allows us to grow natural capital at the same time as we attend to the needs of human populations."

Of course I should also make some mention of our success from a community development perspective. This programme made thousands of lives better than they would otherwise have been, and it is perhaps OI Pejeta's greatest achievement over the past 20 or so years; further proof that conservation and the needs of people are not incompatible. In fact they "need each other", something that the human race needs to recognize sooner rather than later.

Whilst I am in many ways sad to leave OI Pejeta, I have recognized that the scale of the crisis facing the natural world will not be solved at the level of individual conservancies, no matter how successful they are. The planet is in desperate need of new thinking that allows us to grow natural

capital at the same time as we attend to the needs of human populations. We must find new ways of bringing to bear the financial resources that are going to be required if biodiversity and all the associated ecosystem services it provides are going to survive - and ultimately thrive. We cannot solely rely on philanthropic largesse to "save" Africa's wildlife; instead we must develop homegrown solutions that empower people and communities to sustainably manage Africa's natural resources.

On that basis I have taken a new role as the Executive Director of the School of Wildlife Conservation at the African Leadership University. Our aim as a school will be to focus on the "business of conservation", creating the young African leaders

of tomorrow who can transform the wildlife economies of Africa into opportunities for economic development. Our objective is to place three million young entrepreneurial leaders across Africa into jobs by 2035, so the scale of our ambition is huge - but that is the kind of scale that is going to be required to make the difference that is needed.

Allow me to "sign off" by wishing Ol Pejeta and everyone who works there the very best for the future. You have the beginnings of what could become one of Africa's greatest conservation organisations and I know that Justin Heath, the new CEO, will do all he can to make that happen over the next few years. Thank you - it's been a blast!



## WELGIMING OUR NEW CEU

#### **GETTING TO KNOW JUSTIN HEATH, AND WHAT'S COMING UP IN 2022 AND BEYOND**

In April of 2022, we welcomed our new CEO Justin Heath. Justin joined OI Pejeta with extensive leadership experience across four continents. He's a Kenyan citizen who has lived and worked in conservation, community engagement, commerce, and renewable energy.

Throughout his professional career, he has distinguished himself as a visionary leader. Justin has been responsible for tourism operations globally and has exponentially scaled growth in rural renewable energy in Africa. Justin previously led the management of three community conservation areas in

the Greater Mara Ecosystem, working in partnership with tourism partners and landowners juggling the needs of both community and tourism operators, and was instrumental in developing wildlife and livestock integration programmes.

#### What attracted you to joining OI Pejeta at this point in your career?

I've had an interest in joining OI Pejeta for some time, as my uncle previously managed the cattle ranching business here. Additionally, it was the combination of balancing both conservation and commercial interests that drew me in. When I was born, Kenya had 16 million people and in just 40 years, it has grown exponentially to 55 million. It's likely that we'll soon reach 100 million people, yet only 25% of Kenya receives enough rainfall to be considered arable, meaning a quarter of our land has immense population pressure and strain on its output - OI Pejeta is within this 25% of land.

I believe that businesses and NGOs therefore play a really important role in problem solving and finding innovative solutions to such pressures, and we have a responsibility to prove that conservation is a viable land use.

#### Why is conservation so important to you?

I believe we all have a choice when it comes to what we do with our lives. Much of the world has lost its wildlife, although it is encouraging to see wildlife re-enter areas where it has been absent for many years. Africa, the last place in the world with such a density of megafauna, will undoubtedly benefit from more conservation efforts.

The way I see it is if I can spend a little bit of my time giving back, to my country and the land, I'm doing something worthwhile. I think it's a good way to spend my life.

#### How will OI Pejeta change under your leadership?

I'm a big believer that the answers are closer to home than you think, and the answers to OI Pejeta's questions are within. We're looking internally to find the solutions, we need to tap into what's here already, the resources, skill sets, and vision within. We know where the opportunities are for tackling inefficiencies and we know where the opportunities are to expand our rhino populations.

I see my job as focused on helping to solve the problems that our team has and to unlock OI Pejeta's potential.

#### What are you most excited about, that is coming up soon, on OI Pejeta?

I know my first area of excitement will be shared by many reading this, it's the northern white rhinos, the BioRescue project and the 14 embryos we now have. We are making good progress, and there are some exciting milestones coming up in the next few years.

I would also say I'm very excited about getting connectivity across a much bigger landscape. As the Laikipia landscape pulls together, we'll stop working as one ranch or conservancy in isolation but will start to really collaborate at a much bigger scale.

## "The way I see it is if I can spend a little bit of my time giving back, to my country and the land, I'm doing something worthwhile. I think it's a good way to spend my life."

#### What experience have you drawn on most so far in your time at OI Pejeta?

Naturally, when a new CEO arrives the first three months are spent getting to know the organisation and ultimately problem-solving, which is where things stand right now. I think our conservation projects are longer-term and working well. However, operationally right now we are weaker due to a tough couple of years, and we need to reinvest into our core infrastructure first and foremost.

In order to preserve this incredible land, we need to be proactive and find new revenue streams. We want to move away from diesel and develop a sustainable water and energy infrastructure. Last year we lost almost US\$1 million in revenue and if we don't pay attention to our finances, OI Pejeta will cease to exist.

It's not my passion to focus so heavily on the financials, but if our foundation is weak then we're not going to achieve our conservation and community mission.

#### What are your biggest priorities moving forward?

The answer is I'm still trying to figure it out! However, I've put a placeholder in the ground that for the first three months we are going to try and unblock all the quick wins we can – across commercial, tourism, cost management, and staff welfare. I'm looking to seize the opportunities that will improve our efficiencies and effectiveness.

For example, the livestock department have needed an investment in water reticulation into an unused area. That investment has been made. Next is improving our road network and workshops and whilst workshops may sound an unusual focus area, we have 122 generators, pumps, motorbikes, vehicles on the Conservancy to maintain. Another is staff housing - we have good buildings; some just don't have power!

Then the next six months, from July to December, I want to spend looking at our strategic map. Where are we going between now and 2030.

We're seeing the early signs, a natural conglomeration of resource and knowledge sharing, and I think OI Pejeta has a big part to play in that.

Lastly, OI Pejeta is a key place for Kenyans to interact with their natural heritage, a critical place. Even with the lockdowns in 2021, we had over 36,000 Kenyans visit OI Pejeta, and I'm keen to strengthen and deepen that relationship with our people and our landscape. Our visitors come and interact with the environment, experience the wildlife, and the conservation education benefit of that is, as yet, unmeasured here.

#### Lastly, how do you like to spend your free time?

Outdoors with my family. Fly fishing. Hiking. Whilst I haven't climbed Mt. Kenya yet, I have climbed Mt.Kilimanjaro with my eldest daughter when she was eleven and got to the very top. We raised our kids in a tent in the Mara for seven years which was permanent camping, so my wife was very excited to discover a ready-built house to live in on OI Pejeta, our new home.

## IL FELIETS AMBRISH DIRS

#### FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER, WE ANNOUNCE OFFICIAL OL PEJETA AMBASSADORS

JAMES MWENDA has gained global renown in his capacity as a caretaker of the northern white rhinos and rhino conservation activist over the years. He has toured the USA, UK, South Africa, and Hong Kong, delivering passionate talks and inspiring new conservationists everywhere.

Growing up in Meru, a neighbouring town to OI Pejeta, he was fascinated by wildlife from a young age. James lived in a farming community that was constantly in conflict with elephants. The impact on both elephants and the community spurred his desire

to find ways that enable people and animals to live harmoniously together and be appreciated.

Therefore, an opportunity to work for OI Pejeta was a no-brainer for him. He joined as a gardener and over the years his passion for wildlife, especially rhinos, saw him grow in his role. He became one of six rangers taking care of Sudan, the last male northern white rhino, as he breathed his last days and months. Thereafter, consequently looking after Najin and Fatu, the last two female northern white rhinos.

James stepped down from his role as a rhino caregiver at OI Pejeta earlier this year to follow his dreams and ambition. However, he remains a good friend of OI Pejeta and is still zealous about our conservation work and in particular, Najin and Fatu - 'The Girls' as he calls them.

We are extremely honoured and excited to have him as a Global Ambassador for Ol Pejeta and a passionate advocate for wildlife!





"As an ambassador, I feel it is my chance to encourage and inspire people to save endangered species like the rhino. We can do this by fundraising, setting a good example, and looking after our ecosystem. It is important to respect the tiniest of creatures and if you do that all animals will benefit from it."

**ANAY** Eight-year-old Anay fell in love with the animals of OI Pejeta during the COVID-19 lockdown as he watched Secret Safari. When he heard about the plight of rhinos, he decided to get involved. It even inspired him to want to become a veterinary ranger when he grows up!

He started talking about the need to take care of wildlife on his social platforms and in school. His passion caught our attention, and we made him our first young ambassador.

"As an ambassador, I feel it is my chance to encourage and inspire

people to save endangered species like the rhino. We can do this by fundraising, setting a good example, and looking after our ecosystem. It is important to respect the tiniest of creatures and if you do that all animals will benefit from it."



**AMI VITALE** We introduced our friend and world-renowned photographer and conservationist Ami Vitale as our Global Ambassador.

You may recognise her work, amongst others, from the iconic image of Sudan, the last male northern white rhino on earth with Joseph Wachira, a caretaker at OI Pejeta Conservancy in Kenya. The

image won the photo of the decade award and was featured on the cover of National Geographic in October 2019. Ami has followed the story of the northern white rhinos since their relocation to OI Pejeta Conservancy in 2009. The connection she felt to their journey shifted her focus toward wildlife and environmental stories.

This role, therefore, is an extension of her passion and contribution

to conservation. "I'm looking forward to raising awareness of the extraordinary work that the OI Pejeta team does to conserve wildlife and the overall biodiversity while improving the livelihoods of rural communities," said Ami.

A warm welcome to Ami Vitale for joining the OI Pejeta family!





## OL PEJETA UK

#### HETAL GANATRA REFLECTS ON A TOUGH YEAR BUT ONE WHERE YOU, OUR SUPPORTERS, HAVE HELPED BUILD A RESILIENT OL PEJETA. THANK YOU.

The last few years have been like no other; the pandemic, climate change and now the war in Ukraine, combined are impacting and shaping our lives in a way we cannot comprehend.

As a sustainable conservation model, OI Pejeta relies heavily on its ability to generate income from its mission. Thanks to your support, it has enabled us to be more resilient to these shocks and challenges.

We successfully diversified our income by formally establishing our global fundraising, which has provided a critical lifeline in times of need. It has enabled us to build relationships and engage with our

people. We have worked together passionately, diligently, and tirelessly to find innovative ways to generate much-needed funds for the conservation, and protection of wildlife and habitats.

The northern white rhinos and their recovery programme have generated much worldwide attention

"As I reflect, I'm deeply grateful to all our supporters, donors, partners, and stakeholders for their incredible generosity and dedication to our mission. Thanks to your support, it has enabled us to be more resilient to these shocks and challenges."

commercial enterprises, in particular, tourism. Tourism has been adversely impacted during the pandemic, and this may continue with the cost-of-living crisis and soaring inflation.

Ecosystem recovery, conservation management, and habitat connectivity are at risk due to various factors resulting from economic pressures and climate change. These global crises have the potential to devastate and undo conservation gains and the support we have garnered from the rural communities.

As I reflect, I'm deeply grateful to all our supporters, donors, partners, and stakeholders for their incredible generosity and dedication to our donors and supporters; individuals, corporates and institutions on a global scale.

OI Pejeta UK, a registered charity, saw its first full year of operations in 2021. We built a team and deployed our global capabilities, generating US\$3.2m aggregate global fundraising income.

You are now able to donate in taxefficient ways through the UK, the USA and Canada. Our charitable status has helped provide credibility and confidence to you, as grant makers and donors.

It has not been an easy journey, but what I'm most proud of is our

for OI Pejeta. The species' risk of extinction has also highlighted the global importance of our Critically Endangered eastern black rhino – the largest population in the world.

There is still much work to do in generating further awareness about the efforts to conserve our unique ecosystem, including our work with other endangered species, our approach to human-wildlife conflict management, our pioneering use of technology in conservation, and the transformational benefits of our support in the development of rural communities.

#### **The Future**

The last two years have been extremely difficult for the Conservancy, with us barely able to cover the costs for critical core operations and no investment into much-needed improvements such as staff housing, welfare, and infrastructure.

Looking ahead, whilst the priority will be to fund our core programmes conservation and community - your support will also help us to fund the expansion of rhino habitat, in particular the Mutara Conservation Area, improve staff housing and other critical infrastructure, and improve natural resource management - solar for power and water sustainability.

Our futures depend on conserving habitats and ecosystems and ensuring the communities surrounding the Conservancy are holistically integrated and committed to our mission.

Therefore, providing these communities with the opportunity to

access quality education, healthcare, clean water, energy, and income is essential to our holistic focus at OI Pejeta.

Raising funds from both individuals, corporates, and institutions shall continue to be crucial to achieving our vision and our mission's overall success and growth. Whilst fundraising is still nascent, we continue to work hard to build on our efforts as a collective. I look forward to going on this journey with you.



"It has not been an easy journey, but what I'm most proud of is our people. We have worked together passionately, diligently, and tirelessly to find innovative ways to generate much-needed funds for the conservation, and protection of wildlife and habitats."

60





#### The Global Gala for Rhinos

We raised £155,000 at our annual Global Gala for Rhinos - thanks to your support!

This year, the Gala will be held on 22<sup>nd</sup> September - World Rhino Day. The event will be live at The Royal Geographical Society in London, and via an online stream, so you can join from around the world. We will have an evening of informative speakers, engaging entertainment, and a thrilling live auction featuring bespoke safaris, a prize draw, captivating artwork, and photography.

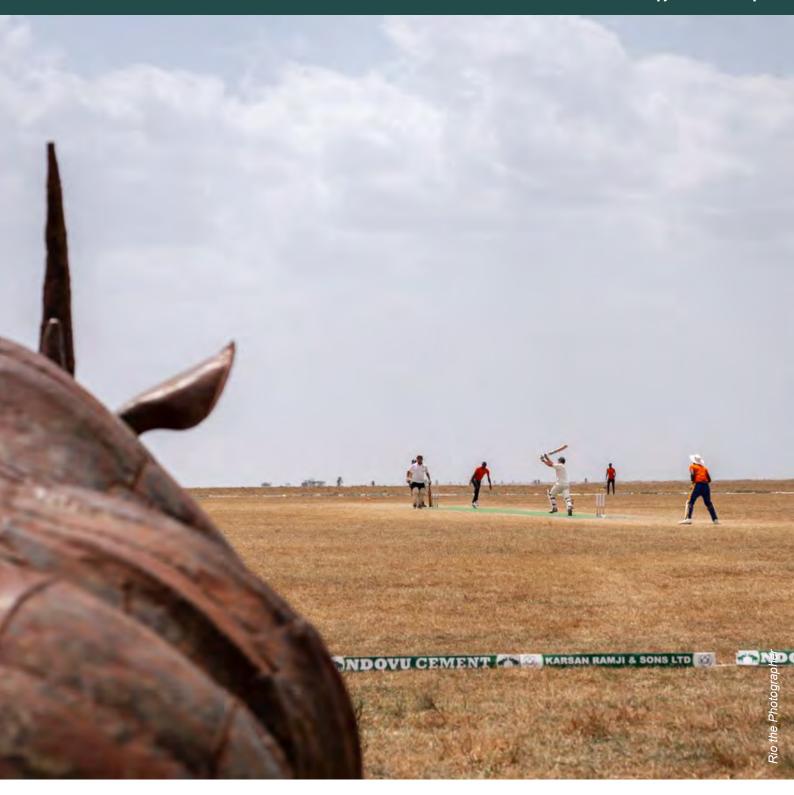


#### **SECRET SAFARI INTO THE WILD**

Secret Safari, Into the Wild, is a six-episode documentary series that made its debut in the UK on Channel 4. It focused on wildlife interactions with people on OI Pejeta and helped us raise awareness about our conservation work. The story is told through a team of dedicated rangers who live and work side by side the animals they help protect.

#### **NAJIN AND FATU FLYING THE SKIES**





#### THE LAST MALE STANDING CRICKET CAME BACK TO OL PEJETA

The Last Male Standing Cricket Cup took place on OI Pejeta after a one-year hiatus due to the global pandemic. It was refreshing to see over 250 attendees enjoy three days of fun, socialising, and sportsmanship. The event was launched in 2015 to create awareness about the northern white rhinos, and in particular, Sudan - the last male northern white rhino. Year on year, it has gained momentum and great interest. We are proud to host this annual event on OI Pejeta.

Twelve teams went head to head, including our OI Pejeta Cricket team. After great sportsmanship, The Obuyas and FYCEK took the Rhino Cup Final and Sudan Smash Final respectively. The funds raised were donated to OI Pejeta and the Foundation for Youth Cricket & Education in Kenya.

Thank you to the Last Male Standing and the British Army Training Unit (BATUK) for leading the logistics for the event.

## FINANCIALS

The business environment in FY 2021 showed a considerable improvement in comparison to FY 2020 as evidenced by the start of the recovery of both local and international travel.

Tourism, being a key driver of the conservancy's revenues, witnessed a **38% growth** in visitor numbers from 2020, at 65,150 visitors recorded in the period. The business incomes were also supported by the agribusiness comprising livestock and arable farming, which remained stable and provided relief towards operating costs and produced positive contributions towards overheads and operating costs during the year.

Ol Pejeta continued to deliver on our mission of wildlife conservation and improving community livelihoods thanks to the project and donor funding received, which **grew by 24%** in comparison to the previous year.

Whilst there are strong prospects and hopes for the return to normal business conditions around the world, there still remain uncertainties and risk which are difficult to quantify in the very near term such, as the prolonged and severe drought with the expected deep negative impact on the agribusiness and the general welfare of our wildlife populations, and also distressed world economies.

Nevertheless, OI Pejeta engages in regular risk evaluation and mitigation to ensure the organisation not only survives but thrives amid these challenges. Strengthening partnerships with all key stakeholders, partners, and donors is key to our sustainability.

Positive to note is that the first half of FY 2022 has provided strong indications of the continued improvement in the business environment, and we remain hopeful this will continue into the remainder of the financial year. We are indeed very grateful to all our stakeholders, partners, and donors for the immense support to the Conservancy, especially in the last two years which proved to be very difficult.

2020 US\$ (000s)

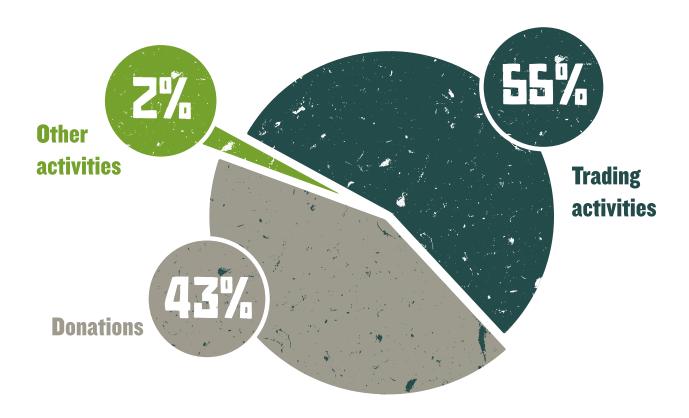
2021 US\$ (000s)

	2021   035 (0008)	2020   035 (0008)
INCOME		
Trading activities	4,120	3,750
Donations	3,205	2,669
Other activities	170	154
TOTAL INCOME:	7,495	6,573
EXPENDITURE		
Programme	6,542	5,321
Fundraising	341	413
Admin support	1,263	1,318
TOTAL EXPENSES:	8,146	7,052
NET INCOME/LOSS	(650)	(480)

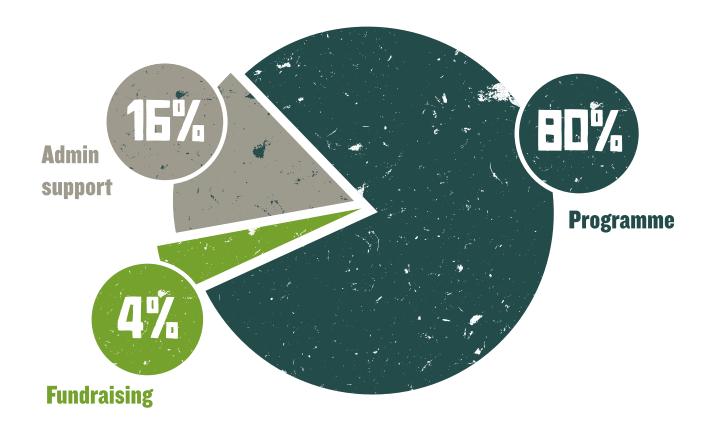
This financial extract is based on the audited financial statements by RSM Eastern Africa LLC, Certified Public Accountants, Nairobi.

The income and expenditure figures include OI Pejeta Conservancy UK in year 2020 and 2021.

#### **REVENUE FROM SOURCE**



#### **TOTAL EXPENDITURE**



### JOIN OUR COMMUNITY AND GET INVOLVED

Our work is only made possible by the amazing community of people who support us year on year. Thank you.

There are many ways to get involved and support our mission and vision wherever you are in the world, including:



Make a one-time gift



Honour a loved one with a donation in their memory



Become a monthly supporter



Invest today in Ol Pejeta's future by supporting our conservation work



Make a charitable gift of stocks, bonds or mutual funds



Remember OI Pejeta in your will or living trust



Symbolically adopt an animal



Leave a portion of your life insurance or retirement plan assets



Name a rhino



Ask if your workplace offers corporate donation matches



Register to give back through Amazon smile



**Sponsor an event** 



Visit our online shop



Give a grant to support our projects



Create your fundraiser for a birthday or occasion



Sign up for our updates



Give tax efficiently in the UK, USA, and Canada

#### **CONTACT US**

Your support, either as an individual, team or through your business can help us to protect the wildlife and people of OI Pejeta. Please get in touch today or follow the link below to find out more:

support@olpejetaconservancy.org





