



...a Sanctuary in the Mountain...

A major endeavor is underway to restore two iconic mammals to the Mt. Kenya ecosystem. The newly formed **Meru Bongo and Rhino Conservation Trust** leads a broad collaboration with **Meru County Government, Ntimaka and Kamulu Community Forest Associations, Kenya Wildlife Service, Kenya Forest Service, Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, Rare Species Conservatory Foundation (Florida, USA) and Florida International University's Tropical Conservation Institute** to coordinate the recovery of mountain bongo antelope and black rhinoceros. Both are critically endangered flagship species that have disappeared from Mt. Kenya's forests but now have renewed hope in the wild thanks to aggressive protection, proven conservation science and conservation breeding, and effective population management.

As part of Kenya's comprehensive, national vision for bongo and rhino, the **Trust** will oversee the development and management of a proposed new sanctuary on Mt. Kenya, infusing breeding bongo and rhino populations across ~139 km² of the species' historical mountain range in which Kenya Forest service has been approached to issue a long term special user license. The proposed sanctuary will receive bongo antelope from the **Rare Species Conservatory Foundation (RSCF)** in Florida, which has successfully propagated bongo for 30 years and long supported bongo conservation in Kenya. This process will be guided and anchored on the elaborate procedures directed by the Kenya Wildlife Service. RSCF and the United Nations Foundation spearheaded a previous repatriation of mountain bongo to Kenya. A robust population of black rhinos at the Lewa Wildlife Conservancy will be connected to the sanctuary and the greater Mt. Kenya ecosystem over time via a series of wildlife corridors. This conservation project will take place in a phased approach where Bongos will be introduced in the first phase and thereafter black rhinos in the second phase of the project.

As a long-term, multi-stakeholder, public-private partnership, the bongo/rhino effort captures the essence of community-based conservation. National and local leadership, complemented by

international technical expertise and diversified financial support, will ensure a bright future for Mt. Kenya's wildlife and wilderness. By integrating local communities' livelihoods with wise landscape use, biodiversity protection, conservation outreach and ecotourism, sustainable benefits will extend to people and wildlife alike.

For more information, project needs and timelines, please contact:

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LWC – www.lewa.org

RSCF – www.rarespecies.org

TCI – tci.fiu.edu