

## Darwin Initiative Main: Annual Report

To be completed with reference to the “Project Reporting Information Note”:  
(<https://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/resources-for-projects/information-notes-learning-notes-briefing-papers-and-reviews/> ).

It is expected that this report will be a **maximum of 20 pages** in length, excluding annexes)

**Submission Deadline: 30<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

**Submit to: [BCF-Reports@niras.com](mailto:BCF-Reports@niras.com) including your project ref in the subject line**

### Darwin Initiative Project Information

Project reference	29-031
Project title	Improved Conservation and Community Benefits in Kenya’s Critical Mountain Forests
Country/ies	Kenya – Aberdare and SW Mau
Lead Partner	The Rhino Ark Kenya Charitable Trust
Project partner(s)	Kenya Forest Service (KFS) and Aberdare Joint Surveillance Unit (AJSU)
Darwin Initiative grant value	£379,319
Start/end dates of project	May 2022 – March 2025
Reporting period (e.g. Apr 2022 – Mar 2023) and number (e.g. Annual Report 1, 2, 3)	Annual Report #1 May 2022 – April 2023
Project Leader name	Christian Lambrechts
Project website/blog/social media	<a href="https://rhinoark.org/">https://rhinoark.org/</a> @rhino.ark (instagram)@RhinoArk (twitter)@rhinoark (facebook) <a href="https://www.linkedin.com/company/rhino-ark-charitable-trust/">https://www.linkedin.com/company/rhino-ark-charitable-trust/</a>
Report author(s) and date	Stacey Smith May 1, 2023

### 1. Project summary

Rhino Ark aims to effect lasting change in two forest ecosystems by addressing habitat degradation, biodiversity decline, engaging communities in conservation, and economically empowering them through sustainable livelihoods.

Our project will resolve illegal logging in the Aberdare ecosystem (See Map in Annex Four) through forest restoration, building a 10 km electrified fence, and support community guides to establish a lucrative ecotourism circuit. In SW Mau, forest degradation and wildlife poaching will be addressed through a community-based forest surveillance, commercial beekeeping and forest restoration programmes.

Kenya’s mountain forests are essential habitats for wildlife including endangered, critically endangered, or declining populations of leopard, mountain bongo, black rhino, and elephant to name but a few. Furthermore, they act as critical water catchment areas, and are the source of

major rivers that provide the much-needed water to Nairobi, which is the key contributor to Kenya's GDP. These rivers support the livelihoods of millions of households in the rural areas. They are also the lifeline of key conservation and tourism areas downstream, including key lakes. Despite their importance, forest habitat loss and degradation has continued despite various conservation interventions.

The key drivers of forest degradation are illegal activities and unsustainable subsistence use. People enter illegally into the mountain forest protected areas to offset their economic challenges. Most often, they enter for timber harvesting, logging of red cedar, over-collection of fuelwood, bush meat hunting, charcoal production, and livestock grazing (although the latter may be permitted on a sustainable basis). These activities are carried out without a thought to the future, or to the possibility of alternative choices that would minimize the negative impacts on the natural capital upon which they depend for their long-term development.

A key impediment to sustainable use of forest resources by community members is that they interact with the forest and its resources as individuals and not as a cohesive group or association that would be able to co-manage the forest with the Kenya Forest Service.

In addition, community members lack the capacity to upscale some of their conservation-based livelihood activities from subsistence to commercial levels which would enable them to increase substantially their income and detract them from unsustainable or illegal forest resources extraction. For example, communities adjacent to SW Mau are beekeepers using traditional log hives. They have no capacity and organized framework to increase production through hive modernization, market access to ensure delivery of commercial-grade honey. In northern Aberdare, community members, on occasion, take tourists to Table Mountain but they have no capacity or resources to develop and market trekking trails, and guide tourists for multi-days treks towards Ol Donyo Lesatima Peak and the Twins Peaks.

Rhino Ark can leverage our considerable experience acquired over 32 years in the conservation of Kenya's mountain ecosystems and the expertise of its public and private partners to safeguard the integrity of forests, conserve their biodiversity and maintain their ecological functions by transforming the interactions of forest-adjacent communities with their forest and its resources while alleviating poverty. This will be achieved by organizing communities into forest associations co-managing the forest, create bio-enterprises, and provide pro-conservation employment.

## **2. Project stakeholders/ partners**

Rhino Ark is extremely collaborative with our partners in the field, and we could not be as effective in achieving our conservation goals without engaging with our partners. Quarterly aerial surveys, jointly undertaken by Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), Kenya Forest Service (KFS) and Rhino Ark, above the Aberdare Ecosystem and South Western Mau have helped to map out illegal red cedar logging hotspots and provide a count of livestock grazing in the forest reserve.

In this project, KWS participates in the community foot patrols in the SW Mau Forest as they have a Station in Kericho town, bordering SW Mau Forest, with a team of 30 rangers equipped to undertake patrols. KWS provides the necessary authorization and security support to protect wildlife within this Reserve. In the Aberdare ecosystem, KWS has one Fence Officer, 5 Fence supervisors and 109 Fence Attendants to repair and maintain the existing 400-kilometres electric fence. The team can be mobilized to re-align, rehabilitate or extend existing fence sections.

Our Partners KFS, KWS and Geta Community Forest Association (CFA) were involved in all the stages of the project from planning, implementation, decision making, monitoring and evaluation as follows:

### **Forest Restoration**

#### **GetaTree Nursery Project**

- Site provided by KFS at Geta Forest Station.
- Co-sharing with KFS on tree nursery resources; for example, to water the seedlings we are using an existing water project previously done by KFS.

- Our tree nursery located next to KFS tree nursery and therefore we share resources such as water supply, security provided by KFS rangers; to collect forest soil for the nursery we use KFS tractor we are only required to provide fuel and labour to load the soil.
- Technical support, on species and seedlings husbandry, by KFS Geta Forest Station Manager (FSM);
- FSM and CFA actively participated in recruitment of Nursery Attendants.
- FSM participated in capacity building of nursery attendants- onsite training.

#### **Sofia forest Re-planting Project**

- Site identified and mapped jointly by KFS, Rhino Ark and CFA.
- Micro-fencing done in collaboration with CFA who provided the skilled and unskilled labour during the construction of the micro-fence to secure the replanting site.
- KFS provided technical support during tree planting while the CFA provided the labour and participate in supervising the tree planting process.
- Two members of CFA hired to maintain the planted site.
- Seedlings were procured from tree nurseries owned by members of the CFA.

#### **Eco-Tourism Project**

- All the four partners- KWS, KFS, CFA and Rhino Ark- participated in Eco-tourism training held at Dive-In, Ndunyu Njeru;
- The four partners participated in selecting the Guides, Porters, and Cooks to be trained.
- Eco-tourism training facilitators were drawn from KWS certified mountain trainers.
- Training workshop was officially opened by the KWS Assistant Director- Aberdare National Park (this is the senior most KWS manager in Aberdare National Park);
- KWS trainers recommended the appropriate camping and working gears.

#### **CFA Rebuilding project**

- CFA, KFS and Rhino Ark involved throughout the process from planning and implementation of community sensitization meetings.
- KFS Headquarters sent the Coordinator of CFAs in Kenya to train the CFA management on how to conduct the affairs of CFA including how to conduct Annual General Elections.

#### **Achievements, Lessons, strengths and Challenges of Partnership**

Effective partnership helped us achieve the following:

- Local Ownership of the projects:** participation of the CFA helped in boosting project ownership as the CFA took lead in introducing the projects to the community.
- Cost effectiveness and timely implementation:** use of KWS Certified Mountain trainers on eco-tourism proved to be cost effective as compared to the consultants in the corporate world. In addition, the KWS team was flexible in terms of the training programme.
- Build Mutual Trust among partners:** from the eco-tourism training held jointly with partners, the eco-tourism associations can directly work with KWS and KFS on payment of park entry fees.

### **3. Project progress**

#### **3.1 Progress in carrying out project Activities**

##### **Forest Restoration**

In South Western Mau, two forest rehabilitation sites were rehabilitated - 30 hectares at Korabariet using Darwin funding (from November 2022), and 40 hectares at Tirigoi (completed in July 2022) with matched funding. The sites were surveyed jointly by Rhino Ark and KFS using GPS. The sites are fully secured with micro fencing. 5 community scouts (2 at Tirigoi and 3 at Korabariet) have been contracted to protect the sites. 44,000 indigenous seedlings were planted at Tirigoi site and 33,000 seedlings at Korabariet site. The seedlings were competitively sourced from various tree nurseries amongst the local communities. A total of 667 community members (335 men, 322 women) were engaged in the rehabilitation work. The forest rehabilitation work has been carried out in the manner and within the time frame anticipated.

The selection of Korabariet as the second site that would be established with Darwin funds was informed by an emergent issue – to address inclusion of communities in an area previously that had not had conservation activities.

### **Community Livelihoods**

Under the CFA rebuilding programme, the previously dormant CFA was revived. A series of sensitization meetings were held across the landscape. Election of new officials was conducted and the registration with the government updated. The CFA received authority from the government to open a bank account, a critical step in being able to operate. A training for the CFA has been held to build capacity in conflict and dispute resolution; management; leadership; the CFA mandate; and CFA structure.

### **Commercial Forest honey enterprise**

The beekeeping programme has been initiated. A series of community sensitization meetings has been held across the landscape. A combined baseline survey/member and beehive mapping process had advanced significantly by end of March 2023 (note the process was completed in April 2023). GIS data and a member/hive qualitative and quantitative database has been developed. Due to the highly challenging terrain (lack of motorable roads during the rainy season) and long distances, the process extended longer than expected, thus pushing some activities beyond the financial period (e.g planned training).

### **Ecotourism enterprise**

Mobilization for establishment of a community tree nursery at Ndoinet Forest Station has commenced. A change of location from the initial plan has been occasioned by an emerging development. The newly elected government has pledged to upgrade an access road that passes through the Ndoinet area. The road leads to a major water dam project site. This upgraded road will substantially improve transport logistics in the area (plagued by poor roads). The improved access will enable the tree nursery to be a major, highly accessible hub for supply of seedlings, granting it a major advantage in the area. The process of rebuilding the CFA and election of new officials also impacted on the timing – allowing the new office bearers to settle in and “own” the project was taken into consideration. The site will also enjoy a security guarantee due to the full time presence of KFS rangers and allow for continuous technical support from the Forest Station manager to the CFA who are its beneficiaries. The proposed site has been surveyed and logistics for its establishment are ongoing. Though the programme is running a bit later than expected, it is anticipated that the revised site will prove advantageous to the CFA.

### **Forest Security**

A forest outpost at Korabariet was build using a standard design/layout agreed with KFS. The outpost comprises 3 no. 4.41 metre round unihuts, 1 large 4.41 x7 metre unihut, an ablution block and a kitchen shed. The outpost was completed and handed over to KFS on 23 March at a formal handing over event. A Certificate of completion by the works engineer was issued confirming satisfactory completion of the work. 2 community scouts are currently deployed there as permanent deployment of KFS rangers is awaited in May 2023. A handing over letter to KFS together with the certificate of completion are on file.

The project team has completed developed of the terms of reference and standard operating procedures for the joint surveillance team, and recruitment will commenced in early May 2023 in collaboration with the now constituted CFA. The project is running a bit behind schedule.

## 3.2 Progress towards project Outputs

### Forest Rehabilitation:

In SW Mau the project is making good progress towards the expected outputs. Forest rehabilitation work is tracking above expectations with a total of 70 hectares rehabilitated against a target of 60 hectares, with a total of 77,000 seedlings planted. 667 community members (335 men and 322 women) have participated in the work. 5 community scouts are engaged in daily monitoring of the replant sites. The Aberdares are progressing as planned with 9ha out of 20ha replanted with indigenous trees and mechanisms put in place to tender these seedlings.

The CFA rebuilding work is proceeding well. Election of new officials, updated registration with the government, receipt of government authority to open a bank account and delivery of initial training modules have been achieved during the reporting period. A total of 350 community members (237 men and 113 women) have participated in the mobilization meetings series across all locations. An initial training module for 50 community members (35 men, 15 women) was carried out.

### Community Livelihoods

#### *Beekeeping Project:*

The groundwork to lay the foundation for this programme has been done, particularly with community sensitization across the landscape and the undertaking of the baseline survey and beehive mapping work (completed in April 2023). The survey captured 104 respondents, with 1,863 beehives mapped.

#### *Establishment of Community Tree Nursery:*

This component is running behind schedule, due to a review of the proposed location to take advantage of local logistical considerations that will provide a further advantage once completed. The model nursery design has been worked out and mobilization to implement the same at the secure Ndoinet Forest Station is underway. More benefits are to be accrued by the 4000 members of Geta CFA once the organization governance structures and management are properly constituted. Geta Tree nursery as creating long term employment opportunity to two members of community and short-term employment for 15 members of community on a need basis.

#### *Ecotourism Activities*

Pro-conservation employment and livelihood support scheme gaining momentum. 9 women and 20 men trained and equipped to undertake eco-tourism activities. In addition, two hiking routes covering 36km have been cleared and there are mechanisms to maintain them to promote tourism activities.

### Forest Security:

#### *Establishment of outposts*

This component is tracking well. The first outpost, at Korabariet, has been constructed and officially handed over to KFS. It is now operational with 2 community scouts posted, and armed KFS rangers anticipated within May 2023. The outpost works completion certificate together with a formal handing over letter to KFS have been issued.

#### *Fencing*

Rhino Ark has also procured 50% of fencing materials for the conservation fence between Wanjohi and Shamata. Once completed, the conservation fence will secure 50ha of Aberdare Ecosystem from illegal loggers.

#### *Joint Surveillance Unit*

Though running a bit behind schedule, the operating protocols and terms of reference have been agreed and the recruitment of personnel in consultation with the newly elected CFA officials will commence.

### 3.3 Progress towards the project Outcome

Prior to project inception, the CFA institutional framework faced governance challenges: the forest management plan had not been executed, officials and registration status with the government were out of date, and there was a general sense of apathy amongst local communities about the role of the CFA. The section of forest at Korabariet had previously not been the focus of conservation activities and was a plagued by illegal, destructive activities.

The area around Tirigoi also faced similar challenges. The project has brought fresh momentum to the CFA and the role it will play in co-management of the forest as per the provisions of the Forest Act. A total of 70 hectares of forest have been newly rehabilitated and are under active management, and a forest outpost has been established in a previously vulnerable area. Specific outcomes of this is two forest zones with heightened levels of conservation and protection.

Engagement of the community on a new (compatible) livelihood project is bringing more people into the mainstream of the conservation fraternity – the marginalized indigenous Ogiek community, originally forest dwellers, for a significant number of the beekeeping population, and they will get the opportunity to actively participate in, and enjoy the economic benefits that

### 3.4 Monitoring of assumptions

**Assumption 1: Availability of quality seeds from the Kenya Forestry Research Institute (KEFRI). Note: In the first year, tree seedlings will be purchased from existing local tree nurseries while we engage the government supplier of certified seeds (KEFRI) to help secure their availability.**

So are this has held true and we were able to acquire quality seedlings from local nurseries. We secured and planted over 87,000 seedlings.

**Assumption 2: KFS and KWS rangers available to participate in joint security patrols.**

This assumption still holds true.

**Assumption 3: Community members desirous to be gainfully employed in pro-conservation work.**

This hold true so far. The project has not experienced any challenges in recruitment for the forest rehabilitation and work. We have been able to hire community members for the project in a variety of capacities.

**Assumption 4: COVID-19 pandemic and Kenyan elections 2022 will not adversely affect tourism industry and community outreach**

The tourism industry is slow to recover from the effects of COVID -19. Broadly, the community outreach work was not affected by the 2022 elections were peaceful but in recent days a section of the political divide is calling for mass action and demonstrations to compel the government to lower the cost of living. The risk of of mass action to the tourism industry is still a risk. The SW Mau area is a strong hold of the dominant, ruling political party and as such was well insulated from political disruption.

**Assumption 5:** Favourable climatic conditions will prevail to enhance seedlings survival rates at the replanting sites.

Soon after planting trees in the last season, we experienced a prolonged drought that that threatened our seedlings. We implemented the interventions to increase their chance of survival such as adding mulch and irrigating the seedlings using water from a local spring inside the replanting site.

### **3.5 Impact: achievement of positive impact on biodiversity and poverty reduction**

Through the establishment of new rehabilitation sites, community members have been engaged in employment. During the dry fire season in January to early March 2023, these community members were at the frontline of early fire detection and subsequent firefighting of forest fires that threatened the forest. Their contribution to this intervention contributed to conservation of biodiversity, i.e. trees and the wildlife in those areas. It is anticipated that this will be a critical role they will play going forward. Similarly, the wider CFA membership have are more sensitized to the role they need to play to support such efforts, contributing to an easier process of community mobilization during fire-fighting efforts.

Impact on biodiversity Conservation:

- Enrichment Tree planting: 10,000 seedlings planted at Sofia. These contribute to biodiversity conservation. Carbon sinks, home for wildlife, avifauna, and insects.
- Conserving water catchment area: At Sophia forest restoration site, we built a micro-fence to secure our replanting block from livestock and human intrusion. Also fence in was a site that used to have a spring where the local community used to fetch water but the spring had completely dried up. The secured spring site seems to have recharged and is oozing some water. The debate is whether the return of the spring is related to our project or is just coincidence.
- Over 1500 members of Geta CFA were directly engaged in community sensitization meeting. We anticipate positive attitude and perceptions towards conservation;
- Training of Trainer-ToT: The 29 youths involved in ecotourism will be the conservation champions to help educate other members of community and report to the management any forest security issues.

Impact on poverty reduction. Project creating employment opportunities to the following:

- Long term engagement: Four Nursery and replanting attendants;
- Short Term contracts: 40 community members involved in pitting, tree planting, spot weeding, 35pax- build 1.5km micro-fence around Sophia replanting site, 10 Youths in off-loading fencing posts and 12 members of community worked at the tree nursery;
- Contracted labour: 19 youths hired to clear the 34km hiking trails; local artisan building water tank platform.
- Market for farm produce: refreshments and food stuff provided to participants of our meetings are sourced local; thereby, benefiting the local farmer. For example, the Hotel where eco-tourism training was conducted was a direct beneficiary of the time our team has already spent in the area.
- The project has also contributed to poverty reduction by providing employment to community scouts tending to the rehabilitated forest sites as well as to the community members/groups supplying tree 77,000 tree seedlings and materials for fencing of the rehabilitated sites in the SW Mau.

### **4. Project support to the Conventions, Treaties or Agreements –Please support any comments with evidence and indicators.**

The project will support the commitments made by the Government of Kenya under the following multilateral environmental agreements:

1. Convention on Biological Diversity (entered into force in Kenya on 24 Oct 1994). The project will contribute towards the implementation of Art.8 (d), (e), (f) by protecting the forest ecosystems and its wildlife (the entire South Western Mau Forest Reserve and the northern part of the Aberdare ecosystem); promoting conservation-compatible livelihoods within the forest-adjacent communities (establishment of a community-based patrol team and a beekeeping cooperative society in South Western Mau; development of a community ecotourism association in northern Aberdares), and rehabilitating degraded forest areas (60

hectares in South Western Mau and 20 hectares in the northern part of the Aberdare ecosystem).

2. NAGOYA PROTOCOL (entered into force in Kenya 12 October 2014). The project will contribute towards the implementation of Art. 1 and 5 by operationalizing two community forest associations that will be able to enter into an agreement with KFS to secure user rights; Art. 6 by carrying out a prior informed consent process before implementing the project activities.

3. CITES (entered into force in Kenya on 13 Mar 1979). The project will contribute towards the implementation of Art. II (4) and Art. VIII (1) by helping protect species listed in CITES Appendices (Appendix I: African elephant, leopard; Appendix II: Yellow-backed duiker, *Prunus africana*).

4. RAMSAR (entered into force in Kenya on 5 Oct 1990). The project will contribute towards the protection of the northern Aberdare, which is the upper water catchment of Malewa River, a main tributary to Lake Naivasha listed as a Ramsar Site.

5. UNFCCC (entered into force in Kenya on 28 Nov 1994). The project will contribute towards Kenya's National Adaption Plan (2015-2030) by enhancing the resilience of key mountain ecosystems to climate variability and change, and support Kenya's Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) by replanting degraded areas towards achieving a tree cover of at least 10% of the land area of Kenya. The project will contribute towards the following SDGs:

No 1 No Poverty: by promoting poverty alleviating conservation-compatible livelihoods (establishment of an 8-person community patrol team in SW Mau; establishment of a beekeeping cooperative society in SWM benefiting 50 beekeepers; development of a community ecotourism association benefiting 10 guides, 15 porters and 5 cooks, replanting 80 hectares providing employment for 1208 persons).

No 6 Clean Water and Sanitation: by rehabilitating critical upper water catchment areas for Malewa River (Aberdares) and Sondu and Mara Rivers (SW Mau).

No 13 Climate Action: by enhancing carbon sinks (forest protection enabling natural forest regeneration over 19,000 hectares of degraded forest in SW Mau; replanting 60 hectares and 20 hectares of heavily degraded forest in SW Mau and northern Aberdare respectively) and increased ecosystem resilience to climate variability through forest protection and restoration.

No 15 Life on Land: by protecting and restoring forest ecosystems in SW Mau and northern Aberdare that have a rich biodiversity, including threatened species (e.g. African elephant, Mountain bongo, leopard, African golden cat, Yellow-backed duiker).

## **5. Project support to poverty reduction.**

The forest adjacent communities largely operate at subsistence level. Of particular note are the indigenous Ogiek community who to a significant extent cling traditional lifestyles. Implementation of the beekeeping project will provide a direct impact by fully engage them into a modern business oriented approach and help them earn increased and more long-term, sustainable incomes.

The establishment of the Korabariet outpost has established a tangible infrastructure and a long term security presence in a previously unpoliced area. The same applies to the new forest rehabilitation sites. The presence of full-time community scouts provides an early detection system for illegal activities. This not only provides sustainable income for these new scouts but will directly contribute to increased security against crime for the adjacent communities and to enhanced forest security against illegal activities (snaring of wildlife, illegal logging and charcoal burning).



## 6. Gender equality and social inclusion

<p>Please quantify the proportion of women on the Project Board<sup>1</sup>.</p>	<p>For the CFA, the officials are elected by the communities directly.</p> <p>However, for community participation, the project as a standard protocol requires that there is gender participation – this is explicitly communicated to the communities.</p> <p>SW Mau Ndoinet CFA officials 9 total Men (6)/Women (3)</p> <p>Total SW MAU CFA membership 1,290 Men (682)/Women (608)</p>
<p>Please quantify the proportion of project partners that are led by women, or which have a senior leadership team consisting of at least 50% women<sup>2</sup>.</p>	<p>(note – project partners are KWS, KFS and the CFA. Representation from KWS and KFS is through the ranking officials responsible for the respective stations.</p>

In the current project, there were deliberate efforts to promote equality between persons of different gender and social characteristics:

- Tree nursery: job opportunities were reserved for women.
- Procuring of seedlings: two CFA groups were tasked to supply the seedlings. The first group was all-women group (Kathure Women Group) while the second group (Wanjohi Tree Nursery) had mixed gender.
- From the inception, the partners were made aware that no single gender could be allowed to take more than two-thirds of the opportunities available, for example, training opportunities, employment opportunities.

## 7. Monitoring and evaluation

To maintain an effective system of monitoring the progress and achievements of the project, the partnerships established with KFS and is key to our success. Field level monitoring is done through regular (weekly) meetings between the Rhino Ark team and KFS. Project activities are monitored through weekly field reports by Rhino Ark field officers, these reports are forwarded to the management for review and input as needed. If any changes or adjustments are needed, the teams address the issues immediately and find appropriate solutions.

Forest rehabilitation work is monitored through regular joint visits between Rhino Ark, Kenya Forest Service and the CFA to inspect the sites and identify any issues needing attention. Seasonal seedling survival assessments form part of the core evaluation process. The CFA rebuilding process is being monitored through field meetings with the CFA leadership, Rhino Ark and KFS. The status of project activities is discussed on a continuing basis by Rhino Ark, KFS and CFA representatives.

## 8. Lessons learnt

The diversity of project activities across a wide landscape calls for frequent meetings across diverse locations almost on a daily basis. For the project team, keeping up with exacting

<sup>1</sup> A Project Board has overall authority for the project, is accountable for its success or failure, and supports the senior project manager to successfully deliver the project.

<sup>2</sup> Partners that have formal governance role in the project, and a formal relationship with the project that may involve staff costs and/or budget management responsibilities.

documentation (writing minutes, following up with M & E reporting, accounting for project expenditure, etc.) is a highly involving task, particularly against the backdrop of field travel on very challenging roads over long distances. A key lesson learnt is the need to inbuild support for the project team to handle this task. Going forward, this issue will be taken into consideration to ease the administrative workload to the team.

With respect to forest restoration we have learned that the use of enclosures through micro-fencing, at replanting site, promoted natural regeneration of other species. Germination of seeds that were previously dormant was evident.

It was interesting to see passion and internal drive plays a significant role in the execution of duties when formal education may be lacking. One of the local Guides, a primary school drop-out, emerging as one of the our outstanding hires. On further probing, I discovered the young man was so passionate about the opportunity presented to him that he excelled and demonstrated that passion can sometimes outweigh formal education.

To address the gender imbalance in a male dominated community, like where our project is, we may need to consider segregating some of the duties and make some of the roles to purely be women only. It emerged that women are excellent in caring for the seedlings for the tree nursery project and tree planting.

## **9. Actions taken in response to previous reviews (if applicable)**

Not applicable. This is the first annual report and to no action was required following the 6 month review.

## **10. Risk Management**

Yes there are new risks that have not been previously accounted for and the Risk Register has been updated. An updated version of the risk register has been added to this filing.

1) GBP-KES exchange rate variations. There have been major variations in the exchange rate between the British Pound (GBP) and the Kenyan Shilling (KES) over the past few months. Since our grant application was submitted in January this year, the GBP depreciated against the KES from 154 to 136 and now has just began to regain strength.

2) Increased cost of living. The cost of living has increased substantially over the past one year. For example, the price for one litre of petrol increased from KES 129 in January 2022 (when the grant proposal was drafted) to KES 179 in October 2022.

The project managers have been exploring ways to reduce costs of the project, in particular operational costs to compensate for the increase cost of materials.

## **11. Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere.**

The road network within the landscape has been a significant issue. Some roads leading to project sites have deteriorated significantly over the past year, leading in some cases to long travel times – a 30km distance can take 2-3 hours to achieve depending on the season. This has been a relevant factor in implementation work. The team is mitigating these impacts through changes in travel planning, including extended stays on site and camping. However, the conditions are not ideal (lack of facilities), and this continues to pose logistical challenges. Lobbying the relevant government authorities and local elected officials in collaboration with partners is part of the effort to address this issue.

## **12. Sustainability and legacy**

Rhino Ark's commitment to the landscape is long-term. Our engagement in this ecosystem is not limited by a specific donor project or funding cycle and the long-term sustainability is reinforced by our commitment and dedication to community involvement and maintaining

positive and effective partnerships. Our project team’s operations, and technical support to all the interventions supported by the Darwin grant will continue.

### 13. Darwin Initiative identity

Rhino is proud to be partners with the Darwin Initiative and has shared our collaboration throughout the past year consistently through our social media channels, local media and Rhino Ark supporters in our biannual publication, the ARKive.

In the first year of our collaboration, there has been 16 posts on our social media channels (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn), two articles in our newsletter publication ARKive, and four media articles in local publications where we acknowledge the Darwin initiative and the incredible impact that its making with conservation efforts in Kenya.

### 14. Safeguarding

Has your Safeguarding Policy been updated in the past 12 months?	<b>YES</b>
Have any concerns been investigated in the past 12 months	<b>NO</b>
Does your project have a Safeguarding focal point? <b>YES</b>	Valerie Gunputrav [REDACTED]
Has the focal point attended any formal training in the last 12 months? <b>YES</b>	<b>YES - 14 September 2022. The training covered: (i) understanding safeguarding and my work; (ii) safeguarding risk assessment and management; (iii) reporting and responding to concerns</b>
What proportion (and number) of project staff have received formal training on Safeguarding? <b>All managers and field officers (in total 15) representing 48% of the staff.</b>	Past: <b>48%</b> Planned: <b>48% [15]</b>
Has there been any lessons learnt or challenges on Safeguarding in the past 12 months? Please ensure no sensitive data is included within responses. <b>NO</b>	
Does the project have any developments or activities planned around Safeguarding in the coming 12 months? If so please specify. <b>Yes, another Safeguarding Training Workshop will be organized for all managers and field officers in July/August 2023.</b>	

### 15. Project expenditure

**Table 1: Project expenditure during the reporting period (1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023)**

These are draft expenditure figures with the actual budget is reflected in the Actual claim form.

<b>Project spend (indicative) since last Annual Report</b>	<b>2022/23 Grant (£)</b>	<b>2022/23 Total Darwin Costs (£)</b>	<b>Variance %</b>	<b>Comments (please explain significant variances)</b>
Staff costs (see below)		[REDACTED]		
Consultancy costs		[REDACTED]		
Overhead Costs		[REDACTED]		



**16. OPTIONAL: Outstanding achievements or progress of your project so far (300-400 words maximum). This section may be used for publicity purposes**

I agree for the Biodiversity Challenge Funds Secretariat to publish the content of this section.

Rhino Ark is very proud of all the achievements made so far with this project. Despite getting a late start, the team has made significant strides towards reaching the objectives of this initiative. The one aspect that stands out is our engagement and revitalization of the (Community Forest Associations (CFA). Prior to project inception, the CFA institutional framework faced governance challenges and there was a general sense of apathy amongst local communities about the role of the CFA. Over the past year, there has been a renewed interest and excitement with the community, and we have made strides in getting CFA's in each region reengaged. This feeling of excitement can't always be captured in a stat or number, but the team is very encouraged.

There are sensitivities with how we communicate with the CFA's but the image below that was posted on our social media, touches aspects of the overall project.

<https://www.instagram.com/p/Cq-CE0Dlp15/>

File Type (Image / Video / Graphic)	File Name or File Location	Caption, country and credit	Online accounts to be tagged (leave blank if none)	Consent of subjects received (delete as necessary)
Images	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/Cq-CE0Dlp15/">https://www.instagram.com/p/Cq-CE0Dlp15/</a>	New ranger outpost completed in SWM	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/rhino.ark/">https://www.instagram.com/rhino.ark/</a> <a href="https://www.facebook.com/RhinoArk">https://www.facebook.com/RhinoArk</a> <a href="https://www.linkedin.com/company/rhino-ark-charitable-trust/">https://www.linkedin.com/company/rhino-ark-charitable-trust/</a>	Yes
				Yes
				Yes
				Yes

## Annex 1: Report of progress and achievements against logframe for Financial Year 2022-2023

Project summary	SMART Indicators	Progress and Achievements April 2022 - March 2023	Actions required/planned for next period
<p><i>Impact</i></p> <p><b>Kenya's vital mountain forest ecosystems protected and restored, contributing to improved biodiversity and human welfare while serving as a scalable model for conservation of other montane forests.</b></p>		<p>Rhino Ark continues to protect the biodiversity of Kenya's mountain ecosystems. The first year has seen great steps towards improving the way in which communities interact with the forest with the integration of action, education and improved livelihoods for those living in the region.</p>	
<p><b>Outcome Forest conservation</b></p> <p><b>Through integrated community engagement in SW Mau and Aberdare resulting in 90,000ha of forest safer, 80ha restored, 3 community enterprises established, 2 community forest management structures operationalized</b></p>	<p>0.1 80 hectares of forest replanted across two mountain ecosystems by end of 2024.</p> <p>0.2 90,000 hectares of forest safer for biodiversity by end of 2024 through 20-days per month joint community / government anti-poaching, de-snaring and biodiversity monitoring foot patrols.</p> <p>0.3 Community Forest Association (CFA) co-management governance structures operationalized in Geta (Aberdare) and Ndoinet (South Western Mau) by 2024 as evidenced by zonal elections and official registration with Registrar of Societies in 2023, and membership drives completed in 2024.</p> <p>0.4 Pro-conservation employment and livelihood supports through establishment by 2024 of:</p> <p><u>In South Western Mau:</u></p> <p>a) 8-person (6 men; 2 women) community ranger team, resulting in an average income increase of £160 per person per month; and</p>	<p>Although the project was initially delayed a few months, it is on track to achieve the predicted outcomes.</p> <p>1. Geta Model tree nursery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Established a Model tree nursery at Geta Forest Station;</li> <li>• 28,115 seedlings of indigenous trees being raised at the nursery;</li> <li>• 2No. Nursery Attendants (1male and 1 Female) from local community employed;</li> <li>• 15No. members of local community hired on a need basis;</li> </ul> <p>Forest Rehabilitation Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replanting site (30Ha plot) secured with a micro-fence;</li> <li>• 11,300 tree seedlings planted (more than 50% of the target – 22,000);</li> </ul>	

	<p>b) one commercial honey enterprise benefitting 50 individuals and beekeeping groups;</p> <p><u>In Aberdare:</u></p> <p>a) 40km of mountain hiking trails; and b) one community hiking association comprised of 10 women and 20 men as guides (10), porters (15) and cooks (5);</p> <p><u>In both ecosystems:</u></p> <p>a) one tree nursery benefitting all duly registered CFA members; and b) the employment of 8 community tree caretakers in forest restoration re-planted areas resulting in an average income increase of £ 80 per person per month.</p> <p>0.5 Project outputs documented and shared with target audiences, including:</p> <p>a) annual project progress reports and final results presented to CFAs at their AGMs; b) progress report to KFS and KWS for South Western Mau at the bi-annual aerial surveillance meetings; and for Aberdare at the monthly Fence Technical Committee meetings; c) annual community barazas (meetings); d) progress report to our national and international partners and supporters through the biannual ARKive newsletter and Rhino Ark social media channels; and e) PowerPoint presentations at science conferences in East Africa (e.g. ICCB, Pathways).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2No. members of local community employed as Site Attendants.</li> <li>• 35No. (22 females &amp; 13 males) of local community hired on a need basis.</li> </ul> <p>Ecotourism Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 36.5KM out of 40KM hiking Route cleared of vegetation overgrowth.</li> <li>• 19No. local Guides, Porters and Cooks hired to clear the hiking trails.</li> <li>• 29No. local Guides, Porters and Cooks trained on Eco-tourism and certificates issued.</li> <li>• 29No. local Guides, Porters and Cooks equipped with hiking and camping gears;</li> <li>• Kenya Wildlife Service and Kenya Forest Service recognize Mikeu Gate as an official hiking route to the peaks of Aberdare National Park.</li> </ul> <p>Conservation Fence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1350No. wooden posts procured and delivered to Geta;</li> <li>• An assortment of electric fence building materials procured and delivered to Rhino Ark;</li> </ul>	
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<p><b>Output 1</b></p> <p><b>Forest restoration – 80 hectares heavily degraded mountain forest secured, replanted and maintained in SW Mau and the Aberdare providing job opportunities to 604 female and 604 male community members.</b></p>	<p>1.1 60 hectares (66,000 KFS-recommended indigenous tree species) of forest replanted in Tirigoi area, microfenced and maintained in South Western Mau by end of 2024.</p> <p>1.2 20 hectares (22,000 KFS-recommended indigenous tree species) of forest replanted in Sophia area, micro-fenced and maintained in the Aberdare by end of 2024.</p> <p>1.3 1,200 tree planters (600 woman and 600 men) hired to plant 88,000 seedlings by the end of 2024.</p> <p>1.4 8 (4 women and 4 men) community tree caretakers (1 caretaker/10ha x 80ha) hired to safeguard and maintain the re-planted areas up to end of 2024</p>	<p>Geta Community Forest Association (CFA) Rebuilding Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Held 3No. meetings with Geta CFA executives and management committee.</li> <li>• Held 15No. Community Sensitization meetings across the 15No. Forest Beats (A beat is the smallest administrative unit used in Management of the state forests in Kenya);</li> <li>• Legal registration of the CFA: Assisted the CFA to file annual returns for the last 9 years with the Registrar of Societies in Kenya. The dysfunction CFA is now being recognized by the government of Kenya. (Filing of Annual Returns is MANDATORY for any society operating in Kenya)</li> <li>• 9ha planted (with 10,000 seedlings) ANNEX 1 Annual seedling survival report</li> </ul>	
<p>Activity 1.1 Survey and secure restoration sites</p>	<p>Site at Sofia, Geta Forest station identified. Total area 30Ha.As planned and on time.</p>		
<p>Activity 1.2, Micro-fence the restoration sites.</p>	<p>Perimeter fence built. 1594 m made of gum posts and barbed wire 40 pax (23 men and 13 female) hired for 15 days. As planned and on time.</p>		
<p>Activity 1.3 Identify through the CFAs the tree planters</p>	<p>35 tree planter (male 23 and 13 female) identified and hired. As planned and on time.</p>		
<p>Activity 1.4 Select, procure and plant indigenous forest seedlings</p>	<p>10,000 seedling selected and procured (indigenous 18” height) from two groups of Geta CFA. One is an all-female group and the other is mixed gender. As planned and on time.</p>		
<p>Activity 1.5 Monitor and maintain the replanted sites</p>	<p>2 site attendants hired (1 male and 1 female). As planned and on time.</p>		
<p><b>Output 2.</b></p> <p><b>Community livelihoods – Through Geta and Ndoinet</b></p>	<p>2.1 CFA forest co-management governance structures operationalized in Geta (Aberdare) and Ndoinet (South Western Mau) by 2024 as evidenced</p>	<p>2007members of Geta CFA start to enjoy forest user rights legally after proper registration of the CFA with the Registrar of Societies.</p> <p>Source: ANNEX 2 GETA CFA membership register</p>	



<p><b>CFAs, 3 community enterprises established (forest honey, ecotourism, and tree nurseries), creating 90 jobs and benefiting forest edge communities while supporting the conservation of 90,000 hectares in South Western Mau and Aberdare.</b></p>	<p>by zonal elections and official registration with Registrar of Societies in 2023; and membership drives completed in 2024.</p> <p>2.2 50 beekeepers (woman and men) trained in modern honey production techniques and established within a honey cooperative society concerned with commercial grade honey production.</p> <p>2.3 10 women and 20 men registered in an ecotourism association and trained as guides (10), porters (15), and cooks (5) using 40kms newly documented and signposted mountain hiking trails.</p> <p>2.4 10 tree nursery attendants (5 women and 5 men) hired in Geta and Ndoinet CFAs, including the establishment of 2 model tree nurseries (potting sheds, stone seedbeds, perimeter chain-link fences, water tanks, shade netting and KEFRI certified seed species stock and tools including wheelbarrows, rakes, water-cans, etc.)</p>	<p>Eco-tourism- 9 men and 20 women trained and equipped in eco-tourism</p> <p>36km of Hiking trail cleared and maintained; and being utilized by the 29 members trained in eco-tourism</p> <p>1 woman and 1 man employed as Nursery attendant</p>
<p>Activity 2.1. CFAs re-building programme</p>		
<p>Activity 2.1.1. Conduct community CFA sensitization meetings across all administrative zones</p>	<p>15No. community sensitization meetings held across the 15No. forest blocks in Geta Forest Station. As planned and on time.</p>	
<p>Activity 2.1.2 Facilitate election of CFA board representatives</p>	<p>Initiated the process by organizing a training of the CFA management on how to conduct free and fair elections. And the transition process of changing the office bearers.</p> <p>The training was facilitated by Coordinator of CFAs in Kenya from KFS HQs.</p>	<p>Actual election deferred to Year 2 of this project because of the knowledge gap identified that required additional training for the CFA. There was also a need to sort out leadership issues.</p>

Activity 2.1.3 Support the legal registration process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Geta CFA had two sets of leaders, we managed to arbitrate the two teams who agreed to work together and shelf their differences.</li> <li>• Geta CFA had not filed annual returns with Kenya Registrar of Societies since 2014.</li> <li>• CFA and Rhino Ark completed the legal registration process.</li> <li>• Geta CFA legally registered.</li> </ul>	This was delayed and moved to year two as it was discovered that the process involved additional work with bringing the teams together.
Activity 2.1.5 Conduct membership drive and registration of members	Not undertaken as CFA leadership challenges delayed the process	This activity is planned for year 2
Activity 2.2 Commercial Forest honey enterprise	This portion of the project is on track.	
Activity 2.2.1 Carry out survey to gather data on individual beekeepers and beekeeping groups	<p>Community sensitization done – 177 community members reached directly (men 154; women 23).</p> <p>Baseline survey and beehive mapping work combined into 1 assignment 104 respondents captured; 1,863 beehives mapped, with GIS. (hive distribution map included)</p>	
Activity 2.2.2 Undertake GPS mapping for all hives belonging to individual beekeepers and beekeeping groups.	See ANNEX 3	
Activity 2.3 Establish beekeeping cooperative with constitution and bylaws through negotiation meetings with representatives from all constituent beekeeping groups and individuals including selection of 10-member pioneer committee to lead the group to 1st official cooperative meeting and elections.		Planned to be completed in Year 2
Activity Conduct beekeeping training programmes with the National Beekeeping Institute (in Nairobi and in situ at SW Mau) on modern beekeeping methods (hive construction and maintenance, colony management, use of beekeeping suits, harvesting techniques, adaptations to cold weather conditions, etc.)		Planned to be completed in Year 2
Activity 2.2.5 Select suitable location and acquire a rental property to commence honey processing activities; purchase honey processing equipment including Extractors and bottling machines		Planned to be completed in Year 2

<p>Activity 2.3 Ecotourism enterprise Activity 2.3.1 Convene meetings with Geta CFA to identify candidates to participate in the guides, porters, and cooks training programme</p>	<p>Meeting chaired by Geta Forest Station Manager and attended by CFA Executives was conducted. Trainees selected from two existing Eco-tourism groups-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Table Mountain Guides and Porters Safari</li> <li>(b) Aberdare Ecotourism and Conservancy</li> </ul> <p>As planned and on time.</p>	
<p>Activity 2.3.2 Contract a certified mountain guide consultant to carry out training courses for guides, porters and cooks.</p>	<p>Quotations were received from consultants. Quotations were way beyond our budget; further, the available slots were around April/May 2023 way after Year 1. As planned and on time.</p> <p>We sought for KWS certified mountain trainers who facilitated the training.</p> <p>29 members of CFA trained - 20 male and 9 female As planned and on time.</p>	
<p>Activity 2.3.4 Equip community ecotourism staff with branded uniforms, raingear, backpacks, sleeping bags, and other camping equipment</p>	<p>Assorted hiking and camping gears procured.</p> <p>Teams fitted the hiking gears to confirm the sizes.</p> <p>Rhino Ark has made payment for 10no. additional tents and the supplier is shipping the items. As planned and on time.</p>	
<p>Activity 2.3.5 GPS replace map all trails and document useful landmarks and natural features towards the creation of tourist brochure/maps</p>		<p>Planned to be completed in Year 2</p>

<p>Activity 2.3.6 Clear and maintain all trails, camp and picnic sites through contracted labour</p>	<p>Clearing of the Geta-Kipipiri hiking route completed 17km. By 9no.CFA member (m=6; F=3) Days 15days</p> <p>Clearing of Wanjohi-Table Mountain- OI donyo Lesatima completed 19 Km. Hired 10 CFA members (M = 6; F=4 )</p> <p>Completed as planned.</p>	
<p>Activity 2.3.7 Design and erect trail markers and signage</p>		<p>Planned to be completed in Year 2</p>
<p>Activity 2.3.8 Official commissioning of trails network and community ecotourism association</p>		<p>Planned to be completed in Year 2</p>
<p>Activity 2.3.9 Support the CFA in promoting trails network and community ecotourism programme via social media and national media houses</p>		<p>Planned to be completed in Year 2</p>
<p>Activity 2.4 Community Tree Nurseries</p>		
<p>Activity 2.4.1 Identify through the CFAs, the tree nursery attendants and issue contracts</p>	<p>Two nursery Attendants selected and hired (M=1; F=1)</p> <p>As planned and on time.</p>	
<p>Activity 2.4.2 Train tree nursery attendants in nursery management by KFS</p>	<p>Geta Forest Station Manager trained the Nursery attendants of various aspects.</p> <p>As planned and on time.</p>	
<p>Activity 2.4.3 Prepare land and seedbeds, construct perimeter fence and other nursery structures</p>	<p>Land and seedbeds preparation completed;</p> <p>Perimeter Fence built around the tree nursery;</p> <p>Forest soil collected and potting of polytubes done;</p> <p>Water tank procured and delivered to site. Local artisan contracted to construct a platform for the water tank.</p>	

		As planned and on time.	
Activity 2.4.4 Procure seeds and tree nursery tools		Seeds procured from Kenya Forest Research Institute (KEFRI);  Assorted tools and equipment procured As planned and on time.	
Activity 2.4.5 Official public launch of nurseries, and promotion on social and other media			Planned to be completed in Year 2
Activity 2.4.6 Biannual review of tree nursery performance		Mid and end-year evaluation of the nursery conducted  As planned and on time.	
<b>Output 3.</b> <b>Forest security – 3 new forest security infrastructural elements established, and capacity built for 8 community rangers to undertake joint government / community forest patrols.</b>	3.1 2 forest outposts (uni-huts housing 7 government rangers) built near forest crime hotspots in South Western Mau by end of 2023.  3.2 10 kilometres of conservation electric fence built (Wanjohi to Shamata) in north-western Aberdare by the end of 2023.  3.3 8 community scouts (6 men; 2 women) hired, trained and equipped in South Western Mau by the end of 2023.	10KM Conservation Fence built between Wanjohi and Shamata- 50% of the building materials procured and delivered to the site. Actual construction starts in Year 3 of this project.	
Activity 3.1. Leaders and community sensitization meetings			Planned to be completed in Year 2 and Year 3
Activity 3.1. Procure fence construction materials, tools and equipment		50% of the materials procured and delivered to site.  As planned and on time.	
Activity 3.2 Establish forest boundary beacons by KFS surveyors			Planned to be completed in Year 2
Activity 3.2.4 Recruit community labour and establish fence construction camp at Wanjohi			Planned to be completed in Year 2

Activity 3.2.5 Official launch of the fence project “Placement of the First Post ceremony”		Planned to be completed in Year 2
Activity 3.2.6 Fence alignment, construction of the fence and energizer house		Planned to be completed in Year 2
Activity 3.2.7 Fence construction committee field inspection and site meetings		Planned to be completed in Year 2
Activity 3.2.8 Official Commissioning of the fence “Placement of Final Post ceremony”		Planned to be completed in Year 3
Activity 3.2.9 Establish fence maintenance system including recruitment of 2 Fence Attendants		Planned to be completed in Year 3
<b>Output 4</b> <b>Communications Project outputs documented and shared with target audiences (CFAs, Kenyan government partners, community stakeholders, and international conservation community).</b>	4.1 Annual project progress reports and final results presented to CFAs at their AGMs. 4.2 Progress report to KFS and KWS on South Western Mau at the bi-annual aerial surveillance meetings; Progress report to KFS and KWS on Aberdare at the monthly Fence Technical Committee meetings. 4.3 Annual community barazas (meetings). 4.4 Progress report to our national and international partners and supporters through the biannual ARKive newsletter and Rhino Ark social media channels. 4.5 PowerPoint presentations at science conferences in East Africa, (e.g. ICCB, Pathways)	On track according to the project plan.
Activity 4.1. Convene community barazas (meetings) and CFA briefings	Multiple meetings to advance the CFA relationships	

Activity 4.2 Provide briefings to field-level partner staff during periodic joint project inspections		
Activity 4.3 Present project reports at executive level partner meeting (including aerial surveillance meeting, fence technical committee meetings)	Completed	
Activity 4.4 Issue quarterly project updates through Rhino Ark Mailing list e-shot updates		
Activity 4.5 Publish project reports through Rhino Ark's biannual ARKive newsletter and website	The publication- November 2022 focused on 2 stories including: -Darwin initiative supports forest rehabilitation on page 23 -Aberdare forest restoration under Darwin Initiative on page 29	
Activity 4.6 Publish social media story posts	16 social media posts throughout the year on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn	
Activity 4.7 Organize media (journalist) field trips	Field trips organized resulting in four media stories in local publications – The Star, Daily Nation, Travelog, and The Standard	
Activity 4.8 Produce periodic mini-documentary (short video) for wide distribution	7 minute video produced documenting the fencing project.	A more Darwin focused video planned for year two and three

## Annex 2: Project’s full current logframe as presented in the application form (unless changes have been agreed)

Project summary	SMART Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
<p><b>Impact:</b> Kenya’s vital mountain forest ecosystems protected and restored, contributing to improved biodiversity and human welfare while serving as a scalable model for conservation of other montane forests.</p>			
<p><b>Outcome:</b> Forest conservation through integrated community engagement in South Western Mau and Aberdare resulting in 90,000ha of forest safer, 80ha restored, 3 community enterprises established, 2 community forest management structures operationalized.</p>	<p>0.1 80 hectares of forest replanted across two mountain ecosystems by end of 2024.</p> <p>0.2 90,000 hectares of forest safer for biodiversity by end of 2024 through 20-days per month joint community / government anti-poaching, de-snaring and biodiversity monitoring foot patrols.</p> <p>0.3 Community Forest Association (CFA) co-management governance structures operationalized in Geta (Aberdare) and Ndoinet (South Western Mau) by 2024 as evidenced by zonal elections and official registration with Registrar of Societies in 2023, and membership drives completed in 2024.</p> <p>0.4 Pro-conservation employment and livelihood supports through establishment by 2024 of:</p> <p><u>In South Western Mau:</u></p> <p>a) 8-person (6 men; 2 women) community ranger team, resulting in an average income increase of £160 per person per month; and</p> <p>b) one commercial honey enterprise benefitting 50 individuals and beekeeping groups;</p>	<p>0.1 Annual seedling survival reports for 2022, 2023, and 2024 from 2 mountain ecosystems.</p> <p>0.2 Annual Forest security reports from 2 mountain ecosystems for 2022, 2023, and 2024.</p> <p>0.3 AGM minutes from Geta and Ndoinet CFA for 2022, 2023, and 2024.</p> <p>0.4 In South Western Mau:</p> <p>a) employment contracts for 8 people, and quarterly GPS maps of forest patrolling activities and results in 2022, 2023, and 2024; b) certificate of registration for beekeeping co-operative society.</p> <p>In Aberdare:</p> <p>a) trail markers and signage for 40kms of mountain hiking trails, and paper and digital maps of hiking trails; and b) training certificates for guides, porters, and cooks; In both ecosystems: a) annual seedling inventory from tree nurseries; and b) employment contracts for 8 community tree caretakers</p>	<p>0.1 Availability of quality seeds from the Kenya Forestry Research Institute (KEFRI). Note: In the first year, tree seedlings will be purchased from existing local tree nurseries while we engage the government supplier of certified seeds (KEFRI) to help secure their availability.</p> <p>0.2 KFS and KWS rangers available to participate in joint security patrols.</p> <p>0.3 Community members desirous to be gainfully employed in pro-conservation work.</p> <p>0.4 COVID-19 pandemic and Kenyan elections 2022 will not adversely affect tourism industry and community outreach</p>



	<p><u>In Aberdare:</u></p> <p>b) 40km of mountain hiking trails; and b) one community hiking association comprised of 10 women and 20 men as guides (10), porters (15) and cooks (5);</p> <p><u>In both ecosystems:</u></p> <p>a) one tree nursery benefitting all duly registered CFA members; and</p> <p>b) the employment of 8 community tree caretakers in forest restoration re-planted areas resulting in an average income increase of £ 80 per person per month.</p> <p>0.5 Project outputs documented and shared with target audiences, including:</p> <p>a) annual project progress reports and final results presented to CFAs at their AGMs;</p> <p>b) progress report to KFS and KWS for South Western Mau at the bi-annual aerial surveillance meetings; and for Aberdare at the monthly Fence Technical Committee meetings;</p> <p>c) annual community barazas (meetings);</p> <p>d) progress report to our national and international partners and supporters through the biannual ARKive newsletter and Rhino Ark social media channels; and</p>		
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	e) PowerPoint presentations at science conferences in East Africa (e.g. ICCB, Pathways).		
<b>Output 1</b> 1. Forest restoration – 80 hectares heavily degraded mountain forest secured, replanted and maintained in South Western Mau and the Aberdare providing job opportunities to 604 female and 604 male community members.	1.1 60 hectares (66,000 KFS-recommended indigenous tree species) of forest replanted in Tirigoi area, microfenced and maintained in South Western Mau by end of 2024. 1.2 20 hectares (22,000 KFS-recommended indigenous tree species) of forest replanted in Sophia area, micro-fenced and maintained in the Aberdare by end of 2024. 1.3 1,200 tree planters (600 woman and 600 men) hired to plant 88,000 seedlings by the end of 2024. 1.4 8 (4 women and 4 men) community tree caretakers (1 caretaker/10ha x 80ha) hired to safeguard and maintain the replanted areas up to end of 2024	1.1 Annual seedling survival reports for 2022, 2023, and 2024 from South Western Mau Forest. 1.2 Annual seedling survival reports for 2022, 2023, and 2024 from the Aberdare. 1.3 Payment schedules for community tree planters. 1.4 Employment contracts for 8 community tree caretakers.	Availability of quality seeds from the Kenya Forestry Research Institute (KEFRI). Note: In the first year, tree seedlings will be purchased from existing local tree nurseries while we engage the government supplier of certified seeds (KEFRI) to help secure their availability.
<b>Output 2</b> 2. Community livelihoods – Through Geta and Ndoinet CFAs, 3 community enterprises established (forest honey, ecotourism, and tree nurseries), creating 90 jobs and benefiting forestedge communities while supporting the conservation of 90,000 hectares in South Western Mau and Aberdare.	2.1 CFA forest co-management governance structures operationalized in Geta (Aberdare) and Ndoinet (South Western Mau) by 2024 as evidenced by zonal elections and official registration with Registrar of Societies in 2023; and membership drives completed in 2024. 2.2 50 beekeepers (woman and men) trained in modern honey production techniques and established within a honey	2.1 AGM minutes from Geta and Ndoinet CFAs for 2022, 2023 and 2024. 2.2 Ethnographic survey report of all beekeeping groups and individuals including GPS maps of all established beehives. 2.3 Training course certificates for 50 beekeepers. 2.4 Training course certificates for 30 community members involved in the ecotourism programme; trail	2.1 Honey harvesting groups and individuals are willing to work together under a single cooperative society umbrella

	<p>cooperative society concerned with commercial grade honey production.</p> <p>2.3 10 women and 20 men registered in an ecotourism association and trained as guides (10), porters (15), and cooks (5) using 40kms newly documented and signposted mountain hiking trails.</p> <p>2.4 10 tree nursery attendants (5 women and 5 men) hired in Geta and Ndoinet CFAs, including the establishment of 2 model tree nurseries (potting sheds, stone seedbeds, perimeter chain-link fences, water tanks, shade netting and KEFRI certified seed species stock and tools including wheelbarrows, rakes, water-cans, etc.)</p>	<p>markers, signage, paper / digital maps for 40kms of mountain hiking trails.</p> <p>2.5 Biannual nursery evaluation reports, and employment contracts for 8 community tree caretakers</p>	
<p><b>Output 3</b></p> <p>3. Forest security – 3 new forest security infrastructural elements established and capacity built for 8 community rangers to undertake joint government / community forest patrols.</p>	<p>3.1 2 forest outposts (uni-huts housing 7 government rangers) built near forest crime hotspots in South Western Mau by end of 2023.</p> <p>3.2 10 kilometres of conservation electric fence built (Wanjohi to Shamata) in north-western Aberdare by the end of 2023.</p> <p>3.3 8 community scouts (6 men; 2 women) hired, trained and equipped in South Western Mau by the end of 2023.</p>	<p>3.1 Completed structures; annual forest security reports from 2023 and 2024.</p> <p>3.2 Completed electric fence officially launched by the end of 2023.</p> <p>3.3 Employment contracts for 8 people; quarterly GPS maps of forest patrolling activities; and annual forest security reports from 2022, 2023, and 2024.</p>	<p>3.1 Construction permits secured for building inside the forest.</p> <p>3.2 Fencing materials procured in a timely fashion.</p> <p>3.3 KFS and KWS rangers available to participate in the joint security patrols.</p>
<p><b>Output 4</b></p> <p>4. Communications Project outputs documented and shared with target audiences (CFAs, Kenyan government partners, community</p>	<p>4.1 Annual project progress reports and final results presented to CFAs at their AGMs.</p> <p>4.2 Progress report to KFS and KWS on South Western Mau at the</p>	<p>4.1 Minutes of the AGMs.</p> <p>4.2 Minutes of the aerial surveillance meetings and Fence Technical Committee meetings.</p>	<p>Aerial surveillance flight and meetings are convened at the planned intervals; Fence Technical Committee meetings are convened at planned intervals</p>

<p>stakeholders, and international conservation community).</p>	<p>bi-annual aerial surveillance meetings; Progress report to KFS and KWS on Aberdare at the monthly Fence Technical Committee meetings.</p> <p>4.3 Annual community barazas (meetings).</p> <p>4.4 Progress report to our national and international partners and supporters through the biannual ARKive newsletter and Rhino Ark social media channels.</p> <p>4.5 PowerPoint presentations at science conferences in East Africa, (e.g. ICCB, Pathways)</p>	<p>4.3 List of attendances.</p> <p>4.4 Articles in the ARKive newsletter; Posts on Rhino Ark social media channels.</p> <p>4.5 PowerPoint presentations</p>	
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**Activities** (each activity is numbered according to the output that it will contribute towards, for example 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 are contributing to Output 1)

Output 1: Forest Restoration

- 1.1 Survey and secure restoration sites
- 1.2 Micro-fence the restoration sites
- 1.3 Identify through the CFAs the tree planters
- 1.4 Select, procure and plant indigenous forest seedlings
- 1.5 Monitor and maintain the replanted sites

Output 2: Community Livelihoods

- 2.1 CFAs re-building programme
  - 2.1.1 Conduct community CFA sensitization meetings across all administrative zones
  - 2.1.2 Facilitate election of CFA board representatives
  - 2.1.3 Support the legal registration process
  - 2.1.4 Conduct membership drive and registration of members
  - 2.1.5 Support the convening of the AGMs and review progress made over the past year
- 2.2 Commercial forest honey enterprise
  - 2.2.1 Carry out survey to gather data on individual beekeepers and beekeeping groups
  - 2.2.2 Undertake GPS mapping for all hives belonging to individual beekeepers and beekeeping groups .
- 2.3 Establish beekeeping cooperative with constitution and bylaws through negotiation meetings with representatives from all constituent beekeeping groups and individuals including selection of 10-member pioneer committee to lead the group to 1st official cooperative meeting and elections

2.2.4 Conduct beekeeping training programmes with the National Beekeeping Institute (in Nairobi and in situ at South Western Mau) on modern beekeeping methods (hive construction and maintenance, colony management, use of beekeeping suits, harvesting techniques, adaptations to cold weather conditions, etc.)

2.2.5 Select suitable location and acquire a rental property to commence honey processing activities; purchase honey processing equipment including Extractors and bottling machines

2.3 Ecotourism enterprise

2.3.1 Convene meetings with Geta CFA to identify candidates to participate in the guides, porters, and cooks training programme

2.3.2 Contract a certified mountain guide consultant to carry out training courses for guides, porters and cooks

2.3.3 Equip community ecotourism staff with branded uniforms, raingear, backpacks, sleeping bags, and other camping equipment

2.3.4 GPSreplace map all trails and document useful landmarks and natural features towards the creation of tourist brochure/maps

2.3.5 Clear and maintain all trails, camp and picnic sites through contracted labour

2.3.6 Design and erect trail markers and signage

2.3.7 Official commissioning of trails network and community ecotourism association

2.3.8 Support the CFA in promoting trails network and community ecotourism programme via social media and national media houses

2.4 Community tree nurseries

2.4.1 Identify through the CFAs, the tree nursery attendants and issue contracts

2.4.2 Train tree nursery attendants in nursery management by KFS

2.4.3 Prepare land and seedbeds, construct perimeter fence and other nursery structures

2.4.4 Procure seeds and tree nursery tools

2.4.5 Official public launch of nurseries, and promotion on social and other media

2.4.6 Biannual review of tree nursery performance

Output 3: Forest Security

3.1 Two forest security outposts established (knowing that we already have

a) KFS approval; b) a known standard outpost design template; c) secured forest locations 3.1.1 Procure construction materials for forest security outposts

3.1.2 Build 2 forest security outposts

3.1.3 Officially hand over the 2 forest security outposts to Kenya Forest Service

3.2 Ten kilometers of conservation fence built between Wanjohi and Shamata in Geta Forest Station, Aberdare

3.2.1 Leaders and community sensitization meetings

3.2.2 Procure fence construction materials, tools and equipment

3.2.3 Establish forest boundary beacons by KFS surveyors

3.2.4 Recruit community labour and establish fence construction camp at Wanjohi

3.2.5 Official launch of the fence project "Placement of the First Post ceremony"

3.2.6 Fence alignment, construction of the fence and energizer house

3.2.7 Fence construction committee field inspection and site meetings

3.2.8 Official Commissioning of the fence "Placement of Final Post ceremony"

3.2.9 Establish fence maintenance system including recruitment of 2 Fence Attendants

3.3 Community forest patrols established

- 3.3.1 Develop standard operating procedures for the community forest patrols
- 3.3.2 Recruit, train and equip the 8-member community ranger team
- 3.3.3 Establish patrolling schedule; supervise and manage community rangers

Output 4: Communications

- 4.1 Convene community barazas (meetings) and CFA briefings
- 4.2 Provide briefings to field-level partner staff during periodic joint project inspections
- 4.3 Present project reports at executive level partner meeting (including aerial surveillance meeting, fence technical committee meetings)
- 4.4 Issue quarterly project updates through Rhino Ark Mailing list e-shot updates
- 4.5 Publish project reports through Rhino Ark's biannual ARKive newsletter and website
- 4.6 Publish social media story posts
- 4.7 Organize media (journalist) field trips
- 4.8 Produce periodic mini-documentary (short video) for wide distribution
- 4.9 Make PowerPoint presentations at science conferences in East Africa

**ANNEX 3 Table 1 Project Standard Indicators**

DI Indicator number	Name of indicator using original wording	Name of Indicator after adjusting wording to align with DI Standard Indicators	Units	Disaggregation	Year 1 Total	Year 2 Total	Year 3 Total	Total to date	Total planned during the project
E.g. DI-A01	E.g. People who attended training on CBD Reporting Standards	E.g. Number of officials from national Department of Environment who attended training on CBD Reporting Standards	People	Men	20			20	60
E.g. DI-C17	E.g. Articles published by members of the project team	E.g. Number of unique papers published in peer reviewed journals	Number	None	1			1	4

Rhino Ark has had 75 articles published in 2022 but not specific to the Darwin project. We can provide the list if you think that it would be helpful.

**Table 2 Publications**

Title	Type (e.g. journals, manual, CDs)	Detail (authors, year)	Gender of Lead Author	Nationality of Lead Author	Publishers (name, city)	Available from (e.g. weblink or publisher if not available online)

## Checklist for submission

	Check
Different reporting templates have different questions, and it is important you use the correct one. Have you checked you have used the <b>correct template</b> (checking fund, type of report (i.e. Annual or Final), and year) and <b>deleted the blue guidance text</b> before submission?	X
<b>Is the report less than 10MB?</b> If so, please email to <a href="mailto:BCF-Reports@niras.com">BCF-Reports@niras.com</a> putting the project number in the Subject line.	
<b>Is your report more than 10MB?</b> If so, please discuss with <a href="mailto:BCF-Reports@niras.com">BCF-Reports@niras.com</a> about the best way to deliver the report, putting the project number in the Subject line.	X
<b>Have you included means of verification?</b> You should not submit every project document, but the main outputs and a selection of the others would strengthen the report.	X
<b>Do you have hard copies of material you need to submit with the report?</b> If so, please make this clear in the covering email and ensure all material is marked with the project number. However, we would expect that most material will now be electronic.	NO
If you are submitting photos for publicity purposes, do these meet the outlined requirements (see section 16)?	YES
Have you involved your partners in preparation of the report and named the main contributors	YES
Have you completed the Project Expenditure table fully?	YES, with as much detail as I was given
Do not include claim forms or other communications with this report.	