

OL PEJETA CONSERVANCY

BUILDING A RESILIENT FUTURE

2030 STRATEGY

"GUARDIANS OF NATURE
FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL"

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Kenya's Ol Pejeta Conservancy (OPC) is a unique conservation leader and pioneer that showcases a landscape-level solution to the challenges of climate change and biodiversity decline. Established in 2004, it is a 90,000 acre wildlife conservancy that combines commercial and philanthropic income to implement an integrated conservation model focused on sustainable wildlife habitat management and community development. It is a national treasure, owned and led by Kenyans and held in trust for the Kenyan people.

There is increasing global recognition that the sustainable management of biodiversity lies at the heart of all our futures. Along with 195 other countries, Kenya is a signatory to the 2022 Global Biodiversity Framework, and as such is committed to putting 30% of land under conservation management. OPC is part of a mosaic of critical wildlife habitat in the wider Laikipia landscape, itself one of the most important wildlife landscapes in Kenya. OPC has a critical role to play in securing the long-term ecological integrity and resilience of this wider landscape, in supporting the Kenya Government to meet its international commitments on nature, and ultimately in ensuring the future survival of both wildlife and people.



PURPOSE:

**Guardians of nature
for the benefit of all**



VISION:

**To be a role model
for integrated
conservation**



**MISSION: To conserve
biodiversity for future
generations through
nature-based solutions**



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

1. To manage a healthy habitat for wildlife and livestock

Key Focus Areas:

- Secure the adjacent Mutara Conservation Area (MCA) for black rhinos
- Save the northern white rhino from extinction
- Recovery of endangered species including the introduction of Roan antelope
- Lifelong care of rescued chimpanzees
- Sustainable land management
- Water management
- Embrace digital innovation through the Tech Lab

2. To support sustainable community development and engagement in conservation

- Enable education through scholarships, infrastructure and improved digital literacy
- Support livelihoods through sustainable pastoralism and agriculture and increasing youth employability
- Good governance through trusted engagement, promotion of human wildlife co-existence and conservation education

3. To achieve operational excellence and financial sustainability

- Eliminate poaching and other security risks
- Invest in and maintain optimal infrastructure
- Maintain global brand position
- Grow income across all revenue streams
- Provide support and services to other protected areas
- Improve visitor experiences
- Improve functional effectiveness

4. To engage and support a high performing team

- Invest in our human resource through training and professional development
- Improve staff welfare
- Improve employee engagement
- Effective knowledge management

Underpinned by effective and transparent stakeholder engagement

A LETTER FROM OUR CEO

As we look forward to our 2030 strategy at Ol Pejeta Conservancy, I am thrilled to share with you our strategic objectives for the next five years. Our focus will continue to be on managing a healthy habitat, supporting our local community, reaching financial sustainability and engage a high performing team.

For our wildlife, our main goal is to increase habitat connectivity across Laikipia through securing the adjacent Mutara Conservation Area as part of the national Kenya Rhino Range Expansion plans. Between OPC and 30 other protected areas, we aim to be part of a once in a generation opportunity for Kenya and to create space for rhinos, elephants and scores of other endangered species. Within the conservancy, we continue to prioritise saving the northern white rhino from extinction and recovering the population of countless other vulnerable species.

Together with our local communities, we want to address the tensions between conservation and prosperity for people. Our approach will use the three key principles of partnership, conservation links and support for conservation to navigate the key issues the people in our surrounding areas face from living alongside wildlife. As a result, we hope to pave the way for a sustainable future where conservation and economic success go hand in hand with sustainable local economies.

Our aim to attain operational excellence and financial sustainability is anchored by our firm belief that it is imperative for us to operate with the utmost efficiency, ensuring that our resources are directed towards initiatives that drive meaningful impact. This includes delivering exceptional experiences to our visitors, who make up 50% of our revenue through tourism.

Finally, our human resource are our greatest asset, and we are determined to keep engaging and supporting a high performing team at OPC.. We are one of the biggest employers in Laikipia and we value the extraordinary work our team does to make OPC the success it is. In the run up to 2030, we will invest in our human resource, improve their welfare and ensure effective knowledge management.

2023 was a year of tremendous growth and I am immensely proud of the developments we have made together as a team. We are emerging stronger with renewed commitment to our mission and as we look ahead to the future. I am incredibly excited about the opportunities that lie before us.



Justin Heath



Elephants roam across vast distances in Laikipia and depend on connected habitats for their long-term survival | © Ol Pejeta Conservancy

BACKGROUND

OI Pejeta Conservancy (OPC) was formally established in 2004, transforming a working cattle ranch into a 90,000 acre flagship wildlife conservancy. It is a nationally registered Protected Area and one of the few conservancies in Africa to receive IUCN Green List status.

Located in Laikipia County, it is part of the Ewaso-Samburu ecosystem – one of the country’s most significant natural ecosystems. The Ewaso Nyiro River, with tributaries from Mount Kenya and the Aberdare Range, flows through the conservancy. Dominated by black cotton soils, its diverse vegetation includes grassland and bushland, Acacia and riverine bush. OPC supports the largest population of Critically Endangered eastern black rhino globally, the world’s last two northern white rhinos and a growing population of southern white rhino. A host of other globally important species are also found on the conservancy, including the Endangered Beisa oryx, Grevy’s zebra, the newly re-listed African savanna elephant and some of the highest predator densities north of the Equator.

OPC is part of a larger landscape mosaic covering 3,200 square kilometres of private and publicly owned conservancies and sanctuaries that collectively represent one of the most important reservoirs of biodiversity across Africa. This offers a critical opportunity for wider ecological resilience in the face of climate change, for ‘green’ development approaches through tourism, and for reversing the decline of critically endangered species such as the black rhino by providing ‘room to roam’. OPC is active in its role aiming for contiguity in the wider landscape in support of these goals, including in the 20,000 acre Mutara Conservation Area (MCA) on OPC’s northern border.

Integrated Conservation



OPC has developed an innovative business model that blends commercial income from tourism and agriculture, with philanthropic and grant funding. We integrate wildlife and livestock management across the conservancy and reinvest surplus income into conservation and community development. Ultimately, we aim to manage the landscape for long-term ecological resilience for both wildlife and people.

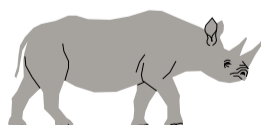
People are central to our model. As a national treasure, OPC is Kenyan led and managed, and would not exist without community-based partnerships that focus on improving education opportunities and creating sustainable livelihoods. This work is key to managing the challenges that come with human population growth and increased pressure on land and natural resources. As guardians of nature, we are demonstrating that wildlife, pastoralism and agriculture can work in harmony for the benefit of all.



Eastern black rhino Porini browsing close to a herd of Boran cattle – OPC’s integrated model combines wildlife conservation and livestock rearing | © OI Pejeta Conservancy

20 years of conservation success

2024 marks our 20th anniversary. We have come a long way and are proud of our achievements, conservation success and community development impact. This has been down to the dedication of our inspirational staff; the generous support of our partners, donors, and visitors; and the collaboration of our neighbouring communities. Highlights and key moments include:



- **2004** Land purchase of OPC.
- **2005** Ol Pejeta Conservancy Limited is incorporated in Kenya as a non-profit company.
- **2006** Community outreach programme developed and Research & Ecological Monitoring Unit strategy completed.
- **2007** Fence between Sweetwaters Game Reserve and Ol Pejeta Game Reserve is removed
Largest ever rhino translocation completed at Ol Pejeta (25 from Solio, 2 from Ol Jogi).
- **2008** Nearly 100 plant species, 50 mammal and 300 bird species are identified on OPC.
The death of Morani, the iconic Ol Pejeta black rhino who was an ambassador for his species.
- **2009** Four of the last seven remaining northern white rhinos are translocated to OPC from the Czech Republic.
- **2011** Security operations ramped up as a poaching incidents increase. One of our ranger units gains official Kenya Police Reserve status.
- **2012** Initiation of the Mount Kenya Wildlife Estate residential scheme to provide financial support to OPC.
- **2013** Antipoaching dog unit (“K9”) established, providing critical support to security operations and in the community.
The black rhino population reaches a significant milestone of 100, thus achieving Key 1 status – the highest in terms of continental importance.
OPC recognised and registered as Community Based Organisation.
- **2014** As one of only two conservancies in Africa, OPC is listed on the IUCN Green List – a mark of protected area management excellence.
- **2015** OPC first hosts the Last Man Standing Rhino Cup cricket tournament to raise funds for conservation and cricket development in Laikipia.
- **2017** For the sixth year in a row, OPC is awarded a TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence. Our Immersive Conservation volunteer programme is launched.
Pan African Sanctuaries Alliance (PASA) and Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries accreditation of Sweetwaters Chimpanzee Sanctuary.
- **2018** The death of Sudan, the last male northern white rhino.
- **2019** OPC’s documentary about Sudan, ‘Kifaru’, premieres in Kenya and wins 5 of it’s 11 award nominations.
Our Conservation Tech Lab is established, aiming to be a global leader in the design and testing of tech enabled solutions to conservation challenges.
The Kifaru Rising project commences, utilising thermal imaging technology along part of our boundary fencing to help keep rangers, wildlife, and people safe.
- **2020** OPC secures funding from USAID to operationalize Laikipia Conservancies Association (LCA) - a member organisation to enhance collaboration and landscape level conservation management.
Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, 2020 is one of the “most difficult ever” in the annals of OPC history, costing us \$4.4 million.
- **2021** OPC’s black rhino population reaches 150.
Channel4 UK air ‘Secret Safari: Into the Wild’ – a TV series about OPC which is watched by millions.
- **2022** Kenya battles severe drought for another year, the rivers run dry across OPC, and we lose over 300 buffalo.
OPC’s bird list reaches 330 species, and the Endangered black wing starling was recorded for the first time on the conservancy.
- **2022** Najin and Fatu, the last two remaining northern white rhinos, are featured on a Kenya Airways aircraft as part of a Magical Kenya campaign.
- **2023** Phase One of our solarisation programme is complete, with solar panels supplying key operational sites and boreholes across OPC.
- **2024** 10-year water masterplan launched and 311 high school scholarships provided for neighbouring communities.

GOVERNANCE

OI Pejeta Conservancy (OPC) is a private not-for-profit organisation, incorporated in Kenya. Originally purchased by Fauna & Flora (formerly FFI) with the financial backing of the Arcus Foundation (founded by Jon Stryker) and working with Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, the land was secured and converted to a national land trust. All three organisations remain involved in the success of the conservancy as active board members of OPC.

OI Pejeta Ranching Limited is fully owned by OI Pejeta Conservancy Limited. OI Pejeta Ranching Limited owns the land, ranching business, and Sweetwaters Chimpanzee Sanctuary and is the only trading company. It generates revenue from Tourism, Agriculture and Livestock.

OPC is managed by a senior management team led by the CEO. It is governed by a ten-member diverse board that brings a wealth of relevant experience, key to the governance of the organisation. This board is responsible for guiding the strategy of OPC and providing financial oversight of the organisation.

Board of Directors

Philip Coulson - Chairman
 Joanna Elliott (FFI)
 Alison Ngibuini (Lewa)
 Drs. Annette Lanjouw (Arcus Foundation)
 Major General (Retired) Michael Gichangi, EGH, CBS, DCO
 The Hon. Francis Ole Kaparo, EGH, SS
 Vijay Gidoomal
 Daniel Karuga
 Dr. Helen Gichohi
 Tim Hobbs

OI Pejeta Conservancy UK

In 2019, OI Pejeta Conservancy UK (OPC UK) was established as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. OPC UK supports the conservancy in Kenya by fundraising for wildlife conservation and community development. Its governing document is its Constitution and its only voting members are its Board of Trustees. Two charity trustees are also members of the Board of OPC Kenya . The CEO of OPC is an ex-officio charity trustee.

Board of Trustees

Joanna Elliott (FFI)
 Drs. Annette Lanjouw (Arcus Foundation)
 Justin Heath (OPC)
 Charles Graham
 Dougal Freeman
 Joseph Palombo



Giraffe and zebra on OI Pejeta Conservancy | © Rio The Photographer

A CHANGING LANDSCAPE FOR CONSERVATION

Over the last 10 years, the context in which we operate has changed significantly. Globally, there has been a drastic decline in biodiversity and climate change has exacerbated this, together with increasing human populations and development – the natural world is under existential threat. Whilst these trends are dire, there has also been a growing understanding of the importance of biodiversity to our economies and human welfare. The increased engagement in nature by corporates and financial institutions should realise opportunities for conservation.

More locally, the Laikipia landscape has also seen change. Growing populations and resultant pressures on natural resources as land uses change and habitats become increasingly fragmented is leading to increased human wildlife conflict with devastating consequences. However, there is also a growing collective movement for conservation through the establishment of the Laikipia Conservancies Association (LCA). These threats and opportunities are all considered in the development of our strategy, including habitat prevention, continued community engagement, conflict mitigation techniques, and policy and law enforcement



Living in harmony with nature

“Biodiversity is fundamental to human well-being, a healthy planet, and economic prosperity for all people, including for living well in balance and in harmony with Mother Earth. We depend on it for food, medicine, energy, clean air and water, security from natural disasters as well as recreation and cultural inspiration, and it supports all systems of life on Earth.”

The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) is a landmark agreement that commits 196 Government signatories to environmental targets that reverse biodiversity loss. It recognises the urgent need to tackle the drivers of nature loss, including climate change that accelerates the extinction of species, limits natural carbon sequestration, and that brings unpredictable weather patterns that take a heavy toll on ecosystems already under stress.

“By 2050, biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and wisely used, maintaining ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential for all people.” (GBF, 2022)

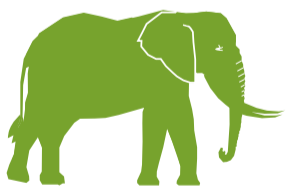
An increasing understanding of the value of nature



The Dasgupta Review in 2021 on The Economics of Biodiversity highlighted that our economies, livelihoods, and well-being all depend on our most precious asset: nature. This idea has given root to a new understanding that our economies are embedded in nature. As governments and the private sector embrace this approach, new opportunities for financing nature are starting to emerge. The review identified that investment in natural capital and ecosystems has the potential to conserve and restore our natural assets and contribute to alleviating poverty. Indeed, mechanisms to make this possible are emerging in the form of the nascent biodiversity credit market and others that aim to scale investment to bring about the level of change that is needed.

The need for biodiversity investment is estimated at \$700 billion annually, but also comes with the opportunity to yield substantial economic, social, climate, and environmental benefits. Conservation models that already mix commercial and grant-based income may well lend themselves well to emerging ideas of ‘natural capital’ and associated private sector biodiversity investment models.

Laikipia – a critical landscape for biodiversity



OPC is located in the Ewaso-Samburu ecosystem of greater northern Kenya. A rangeland plateau fringed by highland forests, it is home to 95 species of mammals—including over half of Kenya’s Critically Endangered black rhinos, Endangered Grevy’s zebra, Beisa oryx, reticulated giraffe, up to 540 species of birds and over 700 plants. It provides contiguous habitat for one of Africa’s last remaining and increasing lion populations as well as an ancient migratory route for Kenya’s second largest elephant herd of over 7,000 individuals.

Laikipia County’s socio-economic landscape is dominated by pastoralist communities, increasing human settlement and agricultural expansion. Agriculture and livestock are the main sources of livelihood, contributing more than 75% of household incomes (World Bank). Around 43% of the population live in poverty, reliant on rain-fed agriculture, vulnerable to climate change and food insecure.

The interlinkages between climate change, human wellbeing, and biodiversity are complex. This is particularly true in Laikipia where the overdependence on rain-fed agriculture and presence of globally significant wildlife give rise to a sensitive and fragile ecosystem. Finding ways for communities living adjacent to OPC to prosper could not be a more important part of a sustainable future for all.

More widely across Laikipia, a mosaic of private and community conservancies collectively manage 3,200 square kilometres of wildlife habitat, sustaining globally significant biodiversity while supporting a pastoral and ranching heritage with deep ties to the land. Representing 40% of Laikipia, this land sustains a unique and thriving tourism market, generating economic and social benefits across the region.

Looking ahead, collective engagement is vital to ensuring conservancy legitimacy, connectivity, as well as the long-term integrity and resilience of the landscape as a whole. We are proud of our role as one of the county’s largest employers and tax payers. In 2020, the Laikipia Conservancies Association (LCA) was formally established as a platform to strategically engage partners. OPC is a founding member of the 22-member association, and works with the LCA to ensure landowner-led conservation is recognised and valued across Kenya and that the conservancy model continues to grow and thrive.



Understanding the context we operate in

OPC strategy has been developed with deep knowledge of the threats and opportunities in the landscape. We know that a healthy habitat connected to a larger mosaic of conservancies also supporting communities holds the key to a resilient landscape at large. To realise this vision, our strategy aims to realise opportunities, embracing new and innovative solutions to tackle threats.

Threats

- Habitat loss, fragmentation and degradation – driven by population growth, poverty, unsustainable development and livestock encroachment.
- Competition for land and water – driven by climate change, wildlife and human population growth, leading to land degradation, human wildlife conflict, insecurity and poaching.
- Increasingly complex external working environment with multiple stakeholder interests.
- Increasing competition for and vulnerability of tourism income.

Opportunities

- Draw on the strong national conservation framework for rhino conservation.
- Participate in the LCA – a platform for greater collaboration and collective conservation in the wider landscape.
- Build increasingly diverse and resilient income streams - evolving our existing successful agriculture and tourism businesses and embracing innovation.
- Leverage our brand, credibility and experience to support others in areas such as technology, fundraising, and operations, and to deliver more through partnerships, increasing impact and reach.
- Build our global presence and continued support of our donors.
- Leverage an increasing understanding of human dependency on biodiversity and the financial opportunities emerging around the new asset class of natural capital and ecosystem services.



Lions on OPC – home to some of the highest predator densities in Kenya | © OI Pejeta Conservancy

GUARDIANS OF NATURE FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL

Our Vision

To be a role model for integrated conservation. For Ol Pejeta Conservancy (OPC) to stand out as a sustainable model of integrated conservation, contiguous with neighbouring protected areas and sustaining thriving populations of wildlife and people.

Our Mission

To conserve biodiversity for future generations through nature-based solutions, which address societal challenges through the protection, sustainable management and restoration of ecosystems.

Our Values

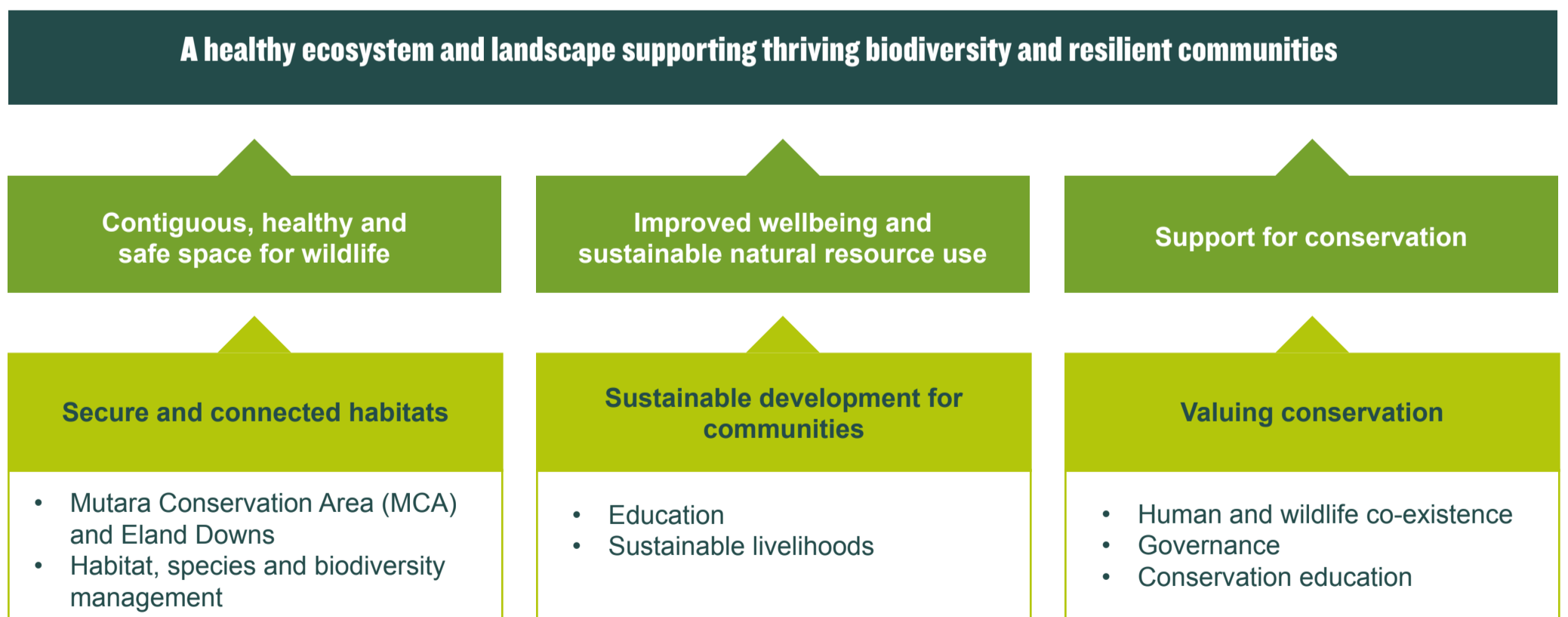
<p>TEAMWORK</p> <p>Working together with shared goals and a common mission</p>	<p>INTEGRITY</p> <p>A focus on honesty, transparency, and high ethical standards</p>	<p>ACCOUNTABILITY</p> <p>Commitment to our purpose and taking responsibility for our actions</p>	<p>PROACTIVITY</p> <p>Taking the initiative to solve problems and deal with issues</p>	<p>INNOVATION</p> <p>Seeking new and creative ideas for positive impact</p>
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Achieving our Mission

Conserving biodiversity will only be successful in the long term if it simultaneously addresses the development needs and aspirations of local communities. This is especially true for people heavily dependent upon natural resources and vulnerable to climate change. Our approach therefore is to ensure that our conservation work translates into social and economic benefits for people. We focus on nature-based solutions that protect, sustainably manage and restore ecosystems in ways that promote both human wellbeing and the conservation of wildlife.

Theory of Change

To achieve our vision and deliver our mission, our work is guided by a Theory of Change and focused around four strategic objectives. It describes the change we want to see and the pathways to achieving that change.



Our Strategic Objectives

<p>To manage a healthy habitat for wildlife and livestock</p>	<p>To support sustainable development</p>	<p>To achieve operational excellence and financial sustainability</p>	<p>To engage and support a high performing team</p>
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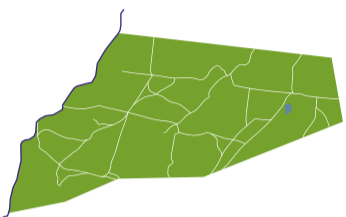
OBJECTIVE I:

To manage a healthy habitat for wildlife and livestock

Habitat fragmentation and degradation is a key threat to the survival of wildlife at Ol Pejeta Conservancy (OPC), driving competition for survival amongst species and with people, increasing the likelihood of human wildlife conflict.

OPC reached its ecological carrying capacity for rhino of 120 animals in 2018. Additional habitat with quality browse and access to water is urgently needed to maintain rhino population growth rates, which have consistently exceeded the 5% national target. As a keystone species, rhinos support overall biodiversity health through their role in the habitat. Contiguity with neighbouring conservancies is vital for free movement of wildlife, species genetic health and long-term survival.

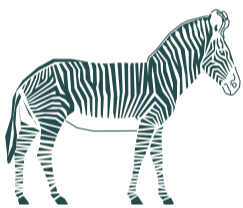
Key focus areas:



Securing the adjacent Mutara Conservation Area (MCA) for black rhino conservation. Since 2013, significant investment has been made to restore the previously over-grazed land, secure boundaries with fencing, provide benefits to communities and install road and water infrastructure. Securing MCA is the first phase of a larger programme which aims to increase habitat connectivity across Laikipia to support biodiversity and healthy populations of endangered species.



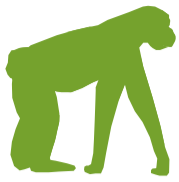
Saving the Northern White Rhino (NWR) from extinction. OPC is home to the world's last two remaining northern white rhino (NWR) – Najin and Fatu. Ground-breaking work will continue with the BioRescue consortium to try and prevent the extinction of the NWR. Pure NWR embryos have been created and are cryopreserved, awaiting the transfer to southern white rhino female surrogates in the foreseeable future.



Recovery of endangered species. OPC supports numerous endangered species, including Grevy's zebra and Beisa oryx, and has been working to grow population numbers. The Grevy's zebra are currently enclosed in a predator-proof boma to increase their chances of breeding with the aim of reintroducing nuclear herds back into the main conservancy. Efforts will focus on reinvigorating the gene pool, increasing monitoring, and disease surveillance. OPC will also explore recovery programmes for other vulnerable species, such as the Roan antelope, utilising genetics expertise from the Conservation Tech Lab on site.



Elephants are a keystone species and play a central role in the natural ecosystem | © Ol Pejeta Conservancy



Continued care of rescued chimpanzees. Sweetwaters Chimpanzee Sanctuary is home to nearly 30 chimpanzees rescued from the illegal wildlife trade. Chimpanzees are not native to Kenya, but the sanctuary provides an important 250 acre facility to care for them. It also provides a platform for advocacy and awareness of the plight of chimpanzees in the wild as supported by the public awareness and education programme at its visitor centre.



Sustainable land management across the conservancy and in the communities we work with. OPC will continue to adopt a productive land management approach, using cattle as an ecological tool for rangeland health. We will explore innovative ways to monitor and quantify the value of this to biodiversity and ecosystem services, as well as address land degradation in our community development and livelihoods work.



Water management to reduce environmental impact and conflict. Water is critical to the survival of both wildlife and people, but can also be the source of conflict. Significant investment in water infrastructure is needed to provide a sustainable supply for OPC. This will enable us to reduce our intake from the Ngobit River to allow a good flow of water downstream to communities that rely on it for their livelihoods through subsistence farming and livestock.



Embrace digital solutions to improve efficiency and effectiveness in wildlife and habitat management. We apply a range of digital solutions such as EarthRanger, thermal imaging security cameras, lion collars, SMART wildlife monitoring and drones, and are exploring opportunities to expand this. Our Conservation Tech Lab aims to be a global leader in co-developing solutions.



OPC is home to the largest population of Critically Endangered eastern black rhino in Kenya and is now the source of translocations to re-establish the species in its ancestral lands – seen here is black rhino Safari and her calf | © Ol Pejeta Conservancy



PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

The Kenya Rhino Range Expansion

This is a once in a generation opportunity for Kenya, which will extend the country's rhino habitat to be one of the largest globally and create space for 1,000 additional rhino, a safe migratory corridor for >7,000 elephants, and protection for other endangered species. The vision is to reconnect the black rhino's ancestral landscapes, fuel economic growth and cement Kenya's legacy as a global leader in biodiversity conservation. OPC is proud to be part of this project, as one of over 30 protected areas that represent 3,200km² of connected reserve for rhinos and other wildlife, helping Kenya to meet its national target of 2,000 black rhino by 2037.

OBJECTIVE 2:

To support sustainable community development and engagement in conservation

The communities that live around OI Pejeta Conservancy (OPC) are key to our conservation success. We recognise that living alongside wildlife can be difficult, particularly in Laikipia where 80% of the population rely on rain-fed agriculture and livestock for their livelihoods and wellbeing. We want to address the tensions between conservation and prosperity for people.

Key issues include:

- A growing population with a high percentage of youth.
- Dependency on rain fed agriculture.
- Shared resources under increasing pressure.
- Land fragmentation and degradation.
- Limited livelihood opportunities.

Our work navigates these challenges and paves the way for a sustainable future where conservation and economic prosperity go hand in hand. Our conservation approach aims to drive economic growth, improve ecosystem health, increase food security and income, provide direct and indirect jobs, support investment in green development and increase resilience to climate change.

The **key principles** that we will adopt are:

- **Partnership**
Working with communities and through partner collaborations.
- **Conservation Links**
Initiatives that both benefit people and address the threats to biodiversity.
- **Support for Conservation**
Where value is seen for OPC's conservation approach as a land use choice and driver of growth.

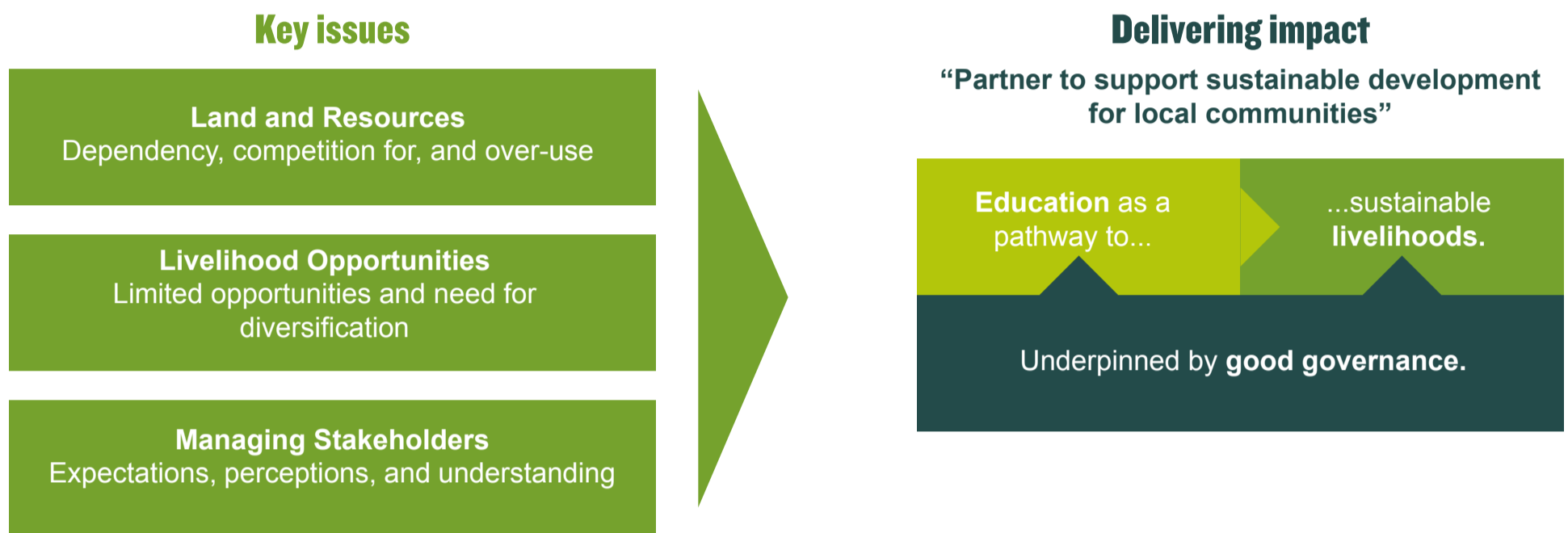


OPC invests in communities living adjacent to the conservancy – seen here is a group of children taking part in a robotics tournament at Moranis, where the winning team proceeded to Nairobi for the national robotics competition | © OI Pejeta Conservancy

Key focus areas:

Whilst we recognise the responsibility of supporting sustainable development of local communities, we cannot do everything. Our focus areas therefore reflect an evaluation of key issues, alignment with our principles and listening to the needs of our neighbours in consultation with stakeholders.

Rooted in the philosophy of stewarding nature, our approach not only nurtures ecosystem health but also bolsters food security, enhances incomes, and generates both direct and indirect employment opportunities. There will be reduced pressure on land and resources, increased livelihood opportunities, and increased support for conservation.



Enabling education. OPC has provided over 800 secondary school scholarships since 2006, showing exponential growth providing 311 in 2024 alone. These are valued by the community and provide a platform for students for improved learning outcomes and livelihood opportunities. The programme will continue as supported by mentoring and participation in conservation education activities. Investment will be made in each of the local primary schools, improving classroom and other facilities. In addition, we will continue our partnership on the African Ruggedised Education System, rolling out digital solutions across schools. A key focus for 2030 will be the development of a School of Conservation



Sustainable livelihoods. We will continue to support improved economic opportunities for communities with a focus on agriculture, livestock management and youth employability. Agriculture is critical to peoples’ livelihoods, but also impacts conservation. Programmes will be shaped around vertical integration in arable and livestock farming. Sustainable water management is also a critical component. Increasing productivity using sustainable methods will improve food security and climate resilience. Youth employability programmes such as TVET will focus on vocational training, internships and facilitating access to job opportunities.



Governance. Meaningful community engagement and participation in conservation underpins our work. Guided by the IUCN’s ten principles of equitable governance, engagement will be structured, two-way and transparent. We will increase participation in project decision making as well as directly in areas such as human wildlife conflict management, where we have created a community-based response unit. Our Conservation Education programme will continue to focus on increasing understanding and appreciation of wildlife and the environment – inspiring the next generation of conservationists and sharing more sustainable practices for natural resource management. There will be continued, regular engagement with Laikipia County government where we will seek to deliver projects in partnership.



PROJECT HIGHLIGHT Improving food security and resilience for communities

The development of our sustainable agriculture programme will be informed by a pilot project run in 2023/4. With an initial focus on food security, we partnered with an NGO and communities to increase water availability and quality, certified seeds on farms. Households were supported to build simple water dams and reticulation systems, as well as implement more sustainable farming practices. Productivity has increased nearly three-fold for some households. As food security improves, the next phase is to evolve to higher value and diverse crops, and support market access to further increase household incomes.

OBJECTIVE 3:

To achieve operational excellence and financial stability

At the heart of our mission lies a firm commitment to conservation and community impact. It is imperative that OI Pejeta Conservancy (OPC) operates with the utmost efficiency, ensuring that our resources, both time and money, are directed towards initiatives that drive meaningful change. We strive for excellence in every facet of our operations – from security and infrastructure management to finance and technology. Critically, we recognize the significance of delivering exceptional experiences to our visitors, enhancing our tourism offering in support of our overarching goals.

OPC prides itself on its approach to productive land management and has always strived for a diverse range of revenue streams, including from tourism, agriculture and our donor network. Diverse finance streams underpin business resilience, something we became acutely aware of during the COVID-19 pandemic when tourism income disappeared. We will continue to innovate around our business model to identify further income generating opportunities.

Key focus areas:



Eliminate poaching and other security risks throughout the conservancy. We are proud of our zero poaching record since 2017. This is a testament to the dedication of our ranger team, innovations in operations monitoring systems, developments in fencing, and our close collaboration with both communities and government security agencies. All of this will continue, together with enhanced real-time monitoring capabilities and a digitised operations centre, enabling faster and effective decision making and resource deployment. Our K9 unit will continue to play a critical role in security management on the conservancy as well as supporting local law enforcement in communities.



Invest in and maintain optimal infrastructure. OPC has hundreds of kilometres of fencing, roads, and water pipes that keep both wildlife and people protected. Whilst investments have been made in roads in recent years, there are further upgrades needed for fencing, buildings, water infrastructure and vehicles.



Maintain global brand position ensuring our service delivery reflects the high standards we have set ourselves and the reputation we have built. In all we do, we will continue to strive for trust and transparency with donors, visitors, and partners. We will also seek opportunities to innovate and increase visibility whilst ensuring that we are credible, consistent, and relevant, and that we continue to earn our reputation as a role model for integrated conservation.



Leverage credibility and capacity to expand our services and extend our knowledge to other conservation initiatives. This includes providing operational services and fundraising support to increase our scale and impact.



Managing water on OPC is critical for the long-term resilience of both people and wildlife in the face of climate change | © OI Pejeta Conservancy



Grow income across all revenue streams to ensure the organisation has sufficient resources to deliver its mission. In tourism, we will review our revenue model and implement changes across our fees and products whilst maintaining quality of experience. Our agribusiness will adopt more sustainable practices as well as improving productivity, introducing value addition, upscaling livestock genetics, growing our herd to 7,500 animals, and exporting semen and/or embryos to 10 countries. Fundraising will continue to grow revenues, exploring new products and markets, and maintaining high levels of donor relationship management. To further support financial sustainability, new revenue streams or investment models will also be explored, likely aligned to the 'value of nature'. Understanding the total value of natural capital and our conservation management approach may be attractive to impact investors or provide opportunities for payment for ecosystem services models such as carbon or biodiversity credits



Improve visitor experiences. Our visitors are our lifeblood, not only contributing on average 50% of our annual income, but also as advocates for conservation and environmental stewardship. We want to make sure every visitor has a special time and feels part of the OPC family. We will work to ensure our customer service, facilities and experiences are exceptional and will update our products as necessary.



Improve functional effectiveness. We will work to ensure our administrative and support functions are set up effectively and enabled by efficient systems and processes. This will include embracing digital solutions where they add value. There will be increased collaboration across departments to further improve efficiency, an understanding and appreciation of other functions, and a supportive culture in working as one team.



Fundraising as a critical enabler. We set up a fundraising team in 2020 to establish a third income stream for the organisation – to improve financial sustainability and reduce exposure to risk associated with the volatile tourism industry. The team has grown from strength to strength, raising on average \$3m a year, enabling the organisation to support operational costs such as ranger salaries, invest in infrastructure, deliver research and impact projects.



OPC provides visitors with unforgettable experiences, such as bush walks with expert guides. | © Ian Cumming



PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

Water resilience

Climate change has driven ever erratic weather patterns in the conservancy – increasing the frequency and intensity of both droughts and flooding. With the majority of surrounding communities dependent on agriculture, it is important that OPC reduces its river abstraction and increases self-sufficiency. A 10-year, \$5m plan, will be implemented including works such as rehabilitating and solarising boreholes, replacing aged and leaking pipelines, increasing rain catchment, and improving water management.

OBJECTIVE 4:

To engage and support a high performing team

Our human resource are our greatest asset. We are one of the biggest employers in Laikipia, with 70% of our staff employed directly from local communities. We value our staff and the extraordinary work they do to make OI Pejeta Conservancy (OPC) the success it is. We recognise that investment in our human resource is key to staff motivation, and to building a culture of high performance and impact.

Key focus areas:



Invest in our human resource to ensure sufficient capacity to deliver our objectives. We will ensure we have skilled, motivated, and empowered staff across all areas of the organisation. There will be investment in staff training and promotion of cross-departmental knowledge sharing. Each staff member has a role to play in the success of OPC and representing us as part of a functional organisational structure.



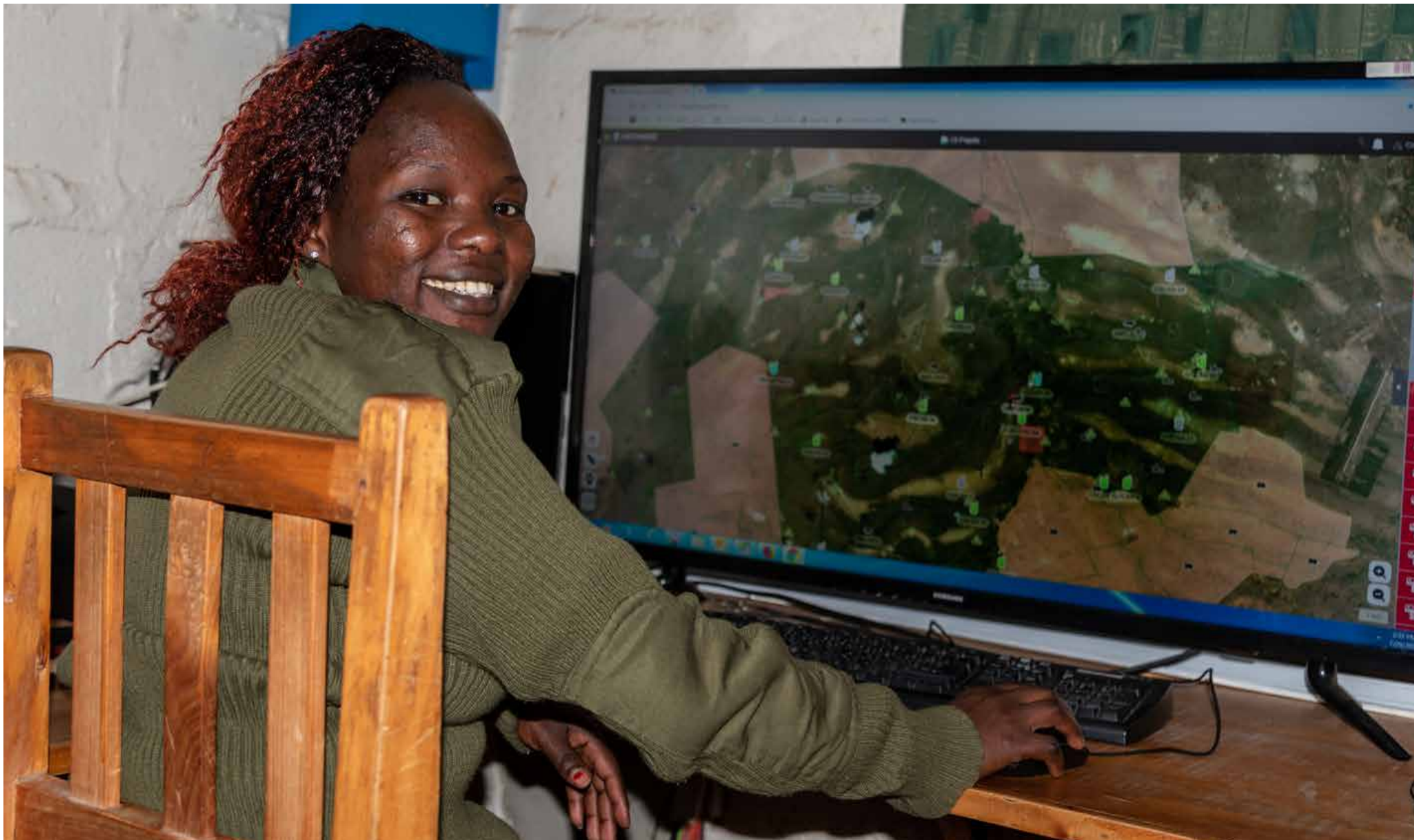
Improve staff welfare so that all staff have the working environment, tools and equipment they need to do their jobs effectively. We will invest in staff accommodation to ensure it is fit for purpose and meets the needs of our team. Recreational facilities will be enhanced so that staff feel valued, promoting a culture of mutual appreciation and respect.



Improve employee engagement with a focus on culture. We will enhance internal communication so all staff understand what all areas of the organisation are doing and feel better connected. There will be regular engagement sessions to showcase successes and share ideas. Team building activities will be rolled out to promote collaboration and trust.



Effective knowledge management is integral to our staff and organisation's success. We will promote teamwork and encourage the sharing of information to enhance collaboration and problem-solving capabilities. Effective record keeping will help ensure that data and information translates to knowledge. Staff will be encouraged to engage in research and further their understanding of the sector. Improved knowledge management will enable us to engage more effectively with external audiences and to demonstrate our impact.



Rebecca Anam in OPC's radio room, one of a team of dedicated staff who monitor activity within the conservancy | © OI Pejeta Conservancy

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT



OPC's Research & Ecological Monitoring Unit and IT teams use innovative technologies for wildlife security and habitat monitoring | © OI Pejeta Conservancy

A key driver of our success to date, as well as how we want to work going forwards, is strong stakeholder engagement. What we do and how we do it is dependent on the support of a wide range of people – local, national, and international. We also recognise our role and responsibility for good governance and the safeguarding of human rights.

OI Pejeta Conservancy (OPC)'s approach is informed by the Conservation Initiative on Human Rights which is grounded in recognition that, because of rural people's strong economic and cultural relationships to land and natural resources, conservation actions have significant potential to contribute to the realisation of human rights. At the same time, efforts to conserve biodiversity and protect ecosystem integrity can affect people's access to land and other natural resources, consequently impacting their enjoyment of human rights. Whilst OPC is private organisation, it is not-for-profit, and whilst land access is restricted, the land is held in trust for Kenyans. We recognise that the livelihoods of surrounding communities depend directly on landscape level ecosystem services and access to natural resources. These are the drivers of our integrated conservation approach that has communities central to our planning and that monitors the impact of our work beyond our physical boundaries. This has been recognised in our IUCN Green Listing, which evaluates social safeguards and quality standards for protected area management and governance, and adheres to international safeguarding and human rights protocols such as the GEF Facility Standards on Environmental and Social Safeguards (2011).

Beyond the people living around our boundaries, OPC is part of a network in Kenya and Africa committed to driving solutions to biodiversity loss and climate change. We support the Kenyan Government to deliver its international commitments on species and the environment as part of agreements including SDGs, CBD, CITES and the Global Biodiversity Framework (especially Target 3). We work closely with Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), and with neighbouring conservancy partners on national species recovery initiatives, as well as to secure the physical contiguity of a large network of protected areas in the wider landscape both for species and wider ecological resilience. On this and others, we work with a range of international partners and donors including US and UK Governments, trusts and foundations and individuals who all play a part in our success.

As a Kenyan owned and led brand, OPC will continue to build on the themes of the 20th anniversary celebrations to increase patriotism and brand equity, highlighting our status as a national treasure and global icon.

MEASURING IMPACT

To hold ourselves accountable and to help demonstrate our impact to stakeholders, we have developed a Balanced Scorecard at OI Pejeta Conservancy (OPC). This identifies a number of measures that will help us track how well we are implementing our strategy.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE		AREA	STRATEGIES AND MEASURE	BASELINE	TARGET
1	To manage a healthy habitat for wildlife and livestock	Rhino conservation	Increase black rhino population	169	6% growth p/a
			Contribute 80 black rhinos to the national meta population	6	80
			Northern white rhino recovery - two births	0	2
		Chimpanzees	Ensure chimpanzees managed at high standards with Sweetwaters meeting 95% of global standards	30%	95%
		Connected habitats	Habitat connectivity secured through Mutara Conservation Area (MCA)	0	16,000
		Security	Eliminate poaching and reduce security incidents	0	0
2	To support sustainable community development and engagement in conservation	Community development	Support students to access education	234	1,000
			Support sustainable livelihoods for people	2,500	6,500
			Improve individual support for conservation	2,000	3,000
3	To achieve operational excellence and financial sustainability	Commercial	Increase tourism and agribusiness revenues	1,010 m KES	2,572 m KES
		Fundraising	Grow fundraising revenues to -\$4m p/a	\$3 m USD	\$4.16 m USD
			Achieve a donor retention rate of 40%	26%	40%
		Tourism	Improve visitor experiences and TripAdvisor rating	4.50	4.90
4	To engage and support a high performing team	Human capital	Improve employee engagement and engagement score	32%	80%
			Ensure talent is fit for purpose, high performing, and 90% meets targets	N/A	90%



OPC builds community resilience by investing in education and sustainable livelihoods | © OI Pejeta Conservancy

Contribution to global goals

We also recognise that there are a number of other external reporting frameworks that are relevant to our work and the impact we have. We will therefore develop a more comprehensive reporting framework that aligns to global measures such as the Global Biodiversity Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals.



Target 3 30% of land is effectively conserved through well-connected and equitably governed systems of protected areas.

Target 4 Halt species extinction, protect genetic diversity, and manage human wildlife conflict.

Target 10 Enhance biodiversity and sustainability in agriculture.

Target 14 Integrate biodiversity in decision-making at every level.



Supporting communities to access secondary education and vocational training.



Sustainable management of water across the conservancy and supporting communities to increase access to water.



Installation of solar energy across the conservancy's operations, staff, and tourism facilities.



Supporting communities to improve wellbeing through sustainable livelihoods.



Sustainable land and natural resource management to mitigate and adapt to climate change.



Core to our purpose – the protection of biodiversity and natural habitats.



OPC protects biodiversity at large and build ecological resilience | © Louis D'Hautefeuille

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