



Ford Wildlife Foundation Donates New Ford Ranger to Help Save Southern Ground-Hornbill

- Mabula Ground-Hornbill Project receives new Ford Ranger to assist conservation efforts
- Focus on Southern Ground-Hornbill in South Africa, including education, research, breeding, artificial rearing and reintroduction programmes
- Endangered species with only approximately 400 family groups remaining in South Africa

PRETORIA, South Africa, 1 December 2018 – The Ford Wildlife Foundation (FWF) handed over a new Ford Ranger to the Mabula Ground Hornbill Project in South Africa to support its conservation efforts for the endangered Southern Ground-hornbill. The handover forms part of Ford Motor Company of Southern Africa's (FMCSA) commitment to the conservation and preservation of the environment in Southern Africa.

The Mabula project, which has been running for 19 years, operates in all four provinces where the Southern Ground-Hornbill occurs, comprising Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal, with the population estimated to be only 400 family groups remaining.

"The Southern Ground-Hornbill is classified as an endangered species in South Africa by the International Union for Conservation of Nature, largely due to a number of threats it faces, including persecution, indirect poisoning, loss of nest sites and electrocution," says Dr Lucy Kemp, manager of the Mabula Ground-Hornbill Project and Africa chair for the Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Hornbill Specialist Group.

This project aims to improve the current status of the species through a number of programmes, such as extensive education and awareness in schools and communities, research, as well as a breeding, wild harvest of redundant chicks and reintroduction programme to boost species numbers.

"Most of the areas we work in are well off the beaten track, so having a powerful Ford Ranger 4x4 will make the field trips effortless and will keep us safe on the roads," Kemp explains. "This will enable us to implement and expand the education and awareness programme, harvest chicks for reintroduction from a wider area, and ensure that we are able to support the Ground-Hornbill custodians across the country."

With its dedicated conservation efforts spanning nearly two decades, some of the highlights of the project include having reintroduced a number of birds successfully in the wild thanks to the establishment of a world-class hand-rearing centre, developing high-tech artificial nests and implementing successful migration methods for this species, which is often targeted by communities for breaking windows.

It also benefits from collaborations both locally and internationally with fellow conservation organisations such as the Women's Leadership and Training Program (WLTP), Children and Nature Conservation Trust Zimbabwe (CNCZ), Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) and the Fitzpatrick Institute of African Ornithology.



Ford Wildlife Foundation Dedication to Conservation

For the past 30 years, FMCSA has been actively involved in the conservation of wildlife and ecosystems in South Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa. To date, FMCSA has invested almost R40 million to support more than 170 conservation projects.

The Ford Wildlife Foundation is unique as it does not provide a cash donation to the conservation projects it supports, instead Ford's partner organisations are equipped with Ford Rangers. The vehicles provided are used to help project operations, such as transporting field equipment, helping vets reach sick or poached animals, or translocating the animals themselves. The vehicles operating in all Ford Wildlife Foundation projects are monitored and serviced by Ford's extensive dealer network to ensure they operate at peak efficiency.

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