

COMMUNAL CONSERVANCIES GIRAFFE POPULATIONS GET BOOST – 30 GIRAFFES TRANSLOCATED IN MOVE TO INCREASE GENETIC DIVERSITY

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The Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) in collaboration with the Giraffe Conservation Foundation (GCF) translocated 30 giraffes to two communal conservancies and a national park within the month of June.

Ministry spokesperson Romeo Muyunda in a statement this week said the translocation took place with the assistance from Du Preez Wild and funding by GCF and Wildlife Conservation Alliance.

According to Muyunda the ministry captured and translocated 13 giraffes to Mangetti National Park in Kavango West; three to Okongo Conservancy in Ohangwena and 14 giraffes to Doro !Nawas Conservancy in the Kunene Region assisted by Ultimate Safaris, a Namibian tourism operator working closely with the conservancy.

“The translocation was in response to the request by the Conservancy Committees to boost their existing small giraffe populations with additional animals to improve

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genetic diversity of giraffe in the area, and also to increase the local tourism potential which would greatly benefit the conservancy and all its members," he said.

According to Muyunda the Ministry will continue to seek for interventions that not only promote conservation of natural resources but also cater for the social and economic developmental of the people.

Meanwhile, Muyunda said the Doro !Nawas Conservancy recently established a joint venture partnership with Ultimate Safaris in developing a low impact tourism venture with maximum yield to the conservancy.

"With ongoing support from Ultimate Safaris and GCF, the conservancy is committed to monitoring all wildlife including this new giraffe population in the area. All partners are committed to providing training to local guides and community members to ensure effective monitoring of these giraffe," he added.

Doro !Nawas Conservancy Chairman Gerson Namiseb brought along his wife to the release and commented afterwards, "It is great to see more giraffe come to our area. I will make sure that our game guards take good care of these animals and keep a lookout for them."

Stephanie Fennessy, Director of GCF added, "During difficult times like the Covid-19 pandemic, it is great to be involved in such amazing collaborative work and to share some good news. Giraffe conservation is a conservation success story in Namibia, and we are proud to play a small role in it."

Caption: Upon release, this giraffe was quick to reclaim its freedom and bolted away from the transport container. (Photograph by MEFT).

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