



TAKING CRITICAL ACTION TO SAVE SOUTH AFRICA'S BAMBI

Start

The Oribi Working Group (OWG), a multidisciplinary Oribi conservation coalition which falls under the Endangered Wildlife Trust's (EWT) Threatened Grassland Species Programme (TGSP), has recently and successfully relocated two pairs of threatened Oribi to new and far more suitable reserves. The translocation of these animals forms part of the EWT's conservation action strategy to save the species.

The Oribi, a highly specialised antelope inhabiting Africa's temperate grasslands, has been classified as Endangered in South Africa's latest Red Data Book for Mammals because of its rapid decline in recent years. The greatest threat to the Oribi is the relentless destruction of their habitat and the persistent persecution of the species through dog hunting.

Said Dr Ian Little, Manager of the EWT's TGSP: "Landowners applying suitable grassland management, and the far more rigorous monitoring and control of dog hunting, can play an important role in improving the situation for Oribi on their properties. However this is, occasionally, beyond the control of landowners and in those isolated circumstances we are stepping in and relocating the threatened Oribi to safer and more appropriate reserves."

The OWG has moved Oribi from the Nambiti Game Reserve in KwaZulu-Natal, where a recent Cheetah relocation put them at risk, to the Gelijkwater Mistbelt Nature Reserve. This mist-belt grassland reserve is owned by MONDI (Ltd) and is ideal for hosting Oribi, which used to be plentiful in the area but disappeared several years ago. Fencing has been constructed and game guards are constantly on patrol ensuring that the reserve is a safe haven for the translocated Oribi.

"We are elated to report that the two pairs of Oribi relocated to Gelijkwater are successfully settling into their new home range. We hope that these and other such efforts result in the development of more substantial, self sustainable populations of Oribi in the future," continued Little.

In order to assess trends in Oribi populations and to identify further doomed populations the EWT-TGSP co-ordinates an annual Oribi survey. Forms will be accessible by August every year at www.ewt.org.za/tgsp. The EWT's OWG is supported by Rand Merchant Bank; Mondi Shanduka Newsprint, Mazda Wildlife Fund, Farmers Agri-care and NCT Forestry Co-operative Limited

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The Endangered Wildlife Trust is a non-profit, public benefit organisation dedicated to conserving species and ecosystems in southern Africa to the benefit of all people.

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The Endangered Wildlife Trust is US 501(c)(3) compliant under **US IRS Registration number:** EMP98-0586801.



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