



For Immediate Release

To: All Media

Date: 15 July 2024

Embargo: None

HISTORIC SIGNING CEREMONY MARKS COLLABORATION BETWEEN AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH COUNCIL(ARC), EKIM WILDLIFE CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE, AND EXXARO

The global population is anticipated to swell to 9 billion by 2050, necessitating increased production of safe and nutritious food. The unmistakable evidence of climate change is adversely affecting food production, ecosystem functionality, and services, while also exacerbating the degradation of soil and water resources. Meeting society's food needs amidst these environmental shifts will demand innovative partnerships between stakeholders in Research & Development and the business sector.

Exxaro, recognising its responsibility as a conscientious corporate entity involved in the extraction of finite resources, is committed to collaborating with scientific, research, and technological advancements to achieve its strategic objectives, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) commitments. This collaboration represents a pivotal link between science, business, and sustainable development. Conversely, the ARC/EKIM Wildlife Centre of Excellence is dedicated to spearheading research-driven solutions to address the complex challenges and obstacles confronting Exxaro and the broader mining industry regarding sustainable development.

Through this partnership, Exxaro, ARC, and the EKIM Wildlife Centre of Excellence will collaborate to advance environmental and social impact initiatives, climate change adaptation, and mitigation strategies in alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) priorities. Additionally, the collaboration aims to cultivate human capital by promoting economic growth through community-based agricultural enterprises.

Key initiatives under this partnership include:

1. Collection and propagation of indigenous grasses and legume species for post-mining rehabilitation.
2. Baseline studies for local economic development aligned with social and labour plans, encompassing bush encroachment management through fodder creation, biochar, and charcoal for sustainable land use.
3. Carbon monitoring in rangelands with implications for climate change adaptation and mitigation.
4. Commercialisation of the game industry to optimise Exxaro's resources.
5. Commercialisation of the beef and goat industries as socio-economic stimuli.

"We are thrilled to partner with both Exxaro and the EKIM Wildlife Centre of Excellence to drive impactful change in the mining industry," said Dr Julius Tjelele, ARC's Animal Production Research Team Manager specialising in Range and Forage Sciences. "By combining our expertise in scientific research with Exxaro's commitment to sustainability, we will work towards a future where mining operations are environmentally responsible and socially beneficial."

Mongezi Vetu, Chief Sustainability Impact Officer at Exxaro said, "It is our duty to ensure that we are responsible stewards of the natural resources that our operations and communities rely on to ensure a sustainable future for our employees, communities and the planet. Our socio-economic development programmes will enhance community resilience by promoting sustainable agricultural practices and improving food security, among others. We are excited about the potential of this partnership and look forward to working with both the ARC and EKIM Wildlife Centre of Excellence to achieve our shared vision of a sustainable, resilient, and prosperous future."

Members of the media are cordially invited to attend the historic signing ceremony of the Agricultural Research Council (ARC), EKIM Wildlife Centre of Excellence (CoE), and Exxaro strategic partnership agreement. This momentous event marks the beginning of a collaborative effort to drive innovation and sustainable development in the mining and environmental sectors.

Venue: ARC-CO, Hatfield, Pretoria

Date: 15 July 2024

Time: 08h30 – 10h30

Location: Agricultural Research Council, 1134 Park Street, Hatfield, Pretoria

GPS Coordinates: S 25° 44' 55. 8" E 28° 14' 14. 0"

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Issued by:

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