

NGORONGORO

CONSERVATION AREA



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ENGLISH

Welcome to Ngorongoro

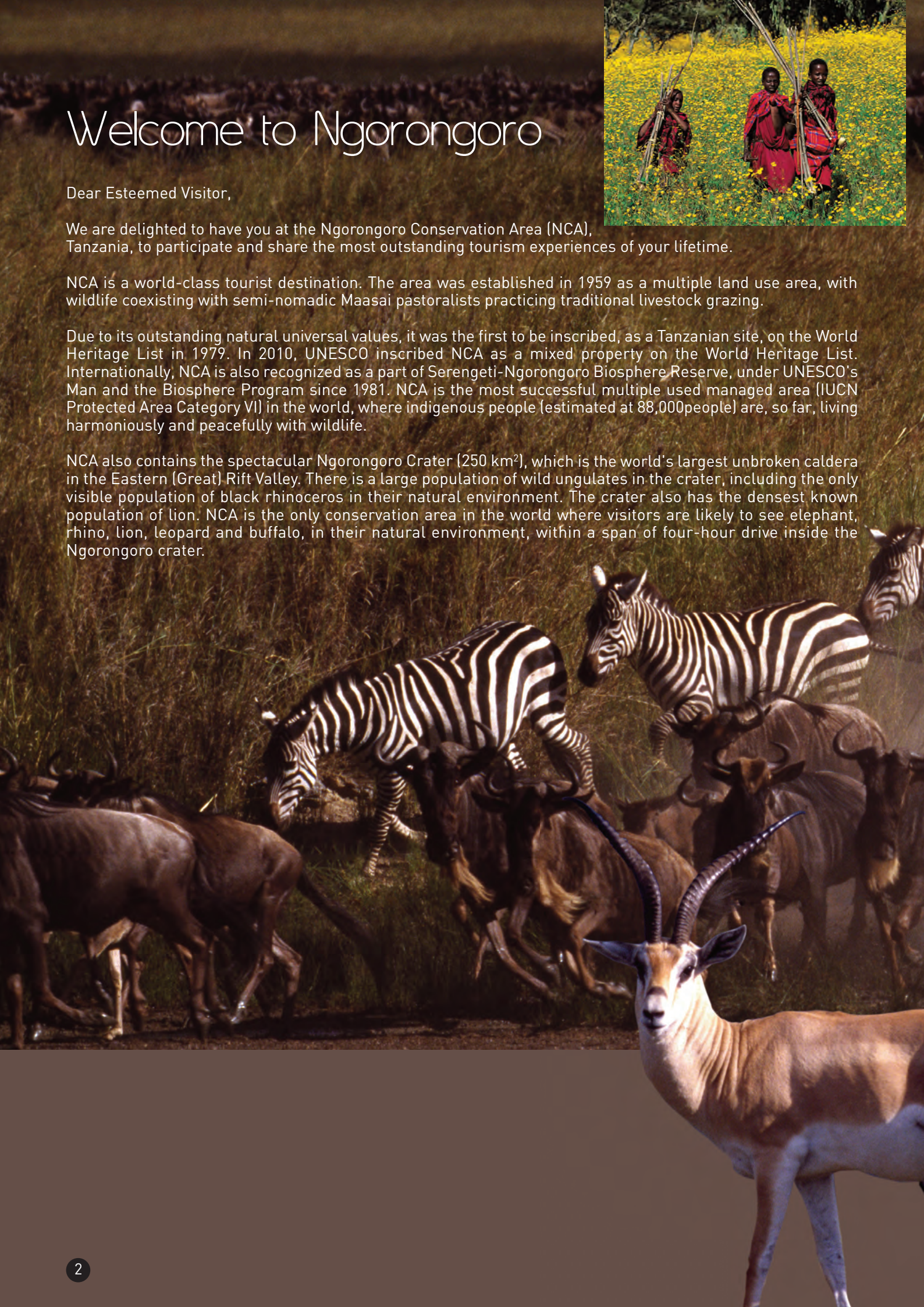
Dear Esteemed Visitor,

We are delighted to have you at the Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCA), Tanzania, to participate and share the most outstanding tourism experiences of your lifetime.

NCA is a world-class tourist destination. The area was established in 1959 as a multiple land use area, with wildlife coexisting with semi-nomadic Maasai pastoralists practicing traditional livestock grazing.

Due to its outstanding natural universal values, it was the first to be inscribed, as a Tanzanian site, on the World Heritage List in 1979. In 2010, UNESCO inscribed NCA as a mixed property on the World Heritage List. Internationally, NCA is also recognized as a part of Serengeti-Ngorongoro Biosphere Reserve, under UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Program since 1981. NCA is the most successful multiple used managed area (IUCN Protected Area Category VI) in the world, where indigenous people (estimated at 88,000 people) are, so far, living harmoniously and peacefully with wildlife.

NCA also contains the spectacular Ngorongoro Crater (250 km²), which is the world's largest unbroken caldera in the Eastern (Great) Rift Valley. There is a large population of wild ungulates in the crater, including the only visible population of black rhinoceros in their natural environment. The crater also has the densest known population of lion. NCA is the only conservation area in the world where visitors are likely to see elephant, rhino, lion, leopard and buffalo, in their natural environment, within a span of four-hour drive inside the Ngorongoro crater.





The Empakai Crater, pristine paradise caldera, is also situated in the highlands of NCA. The crater area is about 6 km wide at the altitude of 3200m above mean sea level and its walls rises 300m above crater floor. A large part of a caldera floor is covered by soda lake with over 61m depth, this is unusual depth for an alkaline lake in around east Africa. It is a home of various wildlife species and flamingoes' seasonal feeding site. Spectacular view of the only active volcano in Tanzania, The Oldonyo Lengai, is evident from the Empakai crater rim.

NCA contains the Oldupai Gorge, one of the most world-renowned palaeontological and archaeological site. The footprints trail of almost 27 meters long, most likely made by *Australopithecus afarensis*, an extinct hominid that lived between 3.9 and 2.9 million years ago, whose fossils are also found in one of the sediment layers at the Laetoli site of NCA.

Throughout the year, there is always something to admire at NCA. I take this opportunity to welcome you to Ngorongoro Conservation Area.

Dr Freddy Safieli Manongi

Conservator
Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority



How to get to Ngorongoro Conservation Area

By air and road

One needs to fly to Julius Nyerere International Airport (JNIA) in Dar es Salaam or direct to Kilimanjaro International Airport (KIA) at Moshi situated at the foot of Mount Kilimanjaro. There is also Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA) in a neighboring country of Kenya. From JNIA and JKIA one can get a local or charter flight to KIA or Arusha town. Then from KIA

there are shuttles and taxis to take you to Arusha city. A good number of international airline carriers do fly direct JNIA, KIA and JKIA.

The road distance from Kilimanjaro international airport, Moshi to Arusha is about 55km of a well tarmac road, about an hour drive.

The road distance from Jomo Kenyatta international airport to Namanga

boarder to Tanzania is about 200 Km and from there to Arusha is about 110Km – a total drive of about 4 hours in a good tarmac road.

From the City of Arusha to Ngorongoro Conservation is about 160 Km of a good tarmac road.

Driving from Arusha to Ngorongoro Conservation Area, one needs to hire 4X4 vehicle for smooth ride within Ngorongoro Conservation Area.





Where to stay inside or outside Ngorongoro

There is one **public campsite named Simba A** situated western of the crater rim with Toilets, hot water showers, kitchen and dining hall facilities, You will need to prepare and come with your own tents, food supplies and cooking utensil.

A good number of **special campsites** are found within NCA, some can be found in the crater rim while others are scattered within NCA (Ndutu area is the preferred site to watch wildebeest migration).

There is a number of tented campsites in the area. Such tented campsites are Lake Masek, Lake Ndutu luxury camp, Oldupai Camp and Ngorongoro Wild Camp.

There are three Lodges on the south west rim of the crater that includes Ngorongoro Wildlife Lodge, Ngorongoro Serena Hotel and Ngorongoro Crater Lodge, on the eastern rim there is Sopa Lodge while Ndutu safari Lodge is situated in Ndutu area. Rhino lodge is on the southern part of the crater rim. All these lodges are exquisite.

However, there are other Lodges situated in Karatu Area, which is just outside the NCA, these include Gibbs farm, Kifaru lodge, Endoro lodge, Ngorongoro farmhouse, Bashay Rift Lodge, High view Hotel, Kudu Lodge etc.



Wildlife in Ngorongoro

Ngorongoro Crater is home to a population of about 25,000 large animals, mostly ungulates, alongside the highest density of mammalian predators in Africa including the densest known population of lion. Ngorongoro harbours a range of endangered species, such as the Black Rhino, Wild hunting dog and Golden Cat. It houses one of the largest animal migrations on earth, including over 1 million wildebeest, 72,000 zebras and 350,000 Thompson and Grant gazelles.

It is also a home to about 500 species of birds. The mix of forests, canyons, grassland, lakes and marshes forms an ideal habitat for an enormous variety of birds. During the rainy season you can see the arrival of Eurasian migrants at the open pools. White storks and Yellow wagtails mingle with the local inhabitants; stilts, saddle bill storks, ibis, ruff and various species of duck.

Lesser flamingos fly in to feed from their breeding grounds at Lake Natron. Distinctive grassland birds such as ostrich, Kori bustards and crown cranes occasionally put on truly magnificent displays.





Ngorongoro crater

The crater covers an area of 304km sq km and its diameter is 19.5 km, while its depth is 630m. The Ngorongoro Crater floor is dominated by open grass land and it has a patch of woodland known as Lerai forest. This forest provides shelter for animals such as elephants, eland, monkey and various bird species.



Ngorongoro-Serengeti-Mara great migration

During the periods of January through March, the southern Serengeti National Park and the western part of NCA (not the Ngorongoro Crater), is inhabited by an estimated 1.5+ million herds of wildebeest and zebra, which is part of the greatest migration of wild ungulates (wildebeest and zebra) on earth. From as early as December the Migration starts to move into the Ngorongoro Conservation Area. The short grass plains here are rich in nutrition which provides the herds with the best conditions to raise their newborn. Mid February is calving season when approximately 8,000 wildebeest are born every day for a period of approximately 3 weeks, therefore the area around Lake Ndutu on the western part of Ngorongoro is the place to be at this time of the year. About 400,000 zebra and 200,000 gazelles accompany the wildebeest along the way, making a total of over 2 million migrating animals in Ngorongoro and Serengeti National Park plains.





Major habitats & land cover types

Open grassland plains dominated by couch grass (*Digitaria macroblephara*) and *Sporobolus marginatus*; Acacia woodland savanna; gallery forest; lowland woodlands with *Commiphora* spp., *Acacia drepanolobium* and *A. gerrardii*; *A. lahai* and *A. seyal*



Geology of the area

Two main rifts of Lake Eyasi in the north and Lakes of Manyara and Natron in the East characterize Ngorongoro conservation Area. The two rifts meet where the nine volcanoes of the Ngorongoro highlands were formed past four million years ago, the ashes and dust from each eruption were carried north –west to form the fertile soils of Serengeti plains. To date, only Oldoinyo Lengai is active, this has resulted into beautiful formations:

The Ngorongoro crater is a giant caldera some 16-19 km in diameter

with the floor lying 400–600 meters below the rim.

A spectacular narrow rock cut known as Orkarian Gorge in the Gol Mountains, is the only Ruppell’s griffon vulture-nesting site in east Africa! In the dry season, the Maasai bring their cattle into the gorge to drink water.

A spectacular tall, black dune composed of magnetic volcanic sand from Oldoinyo Lengai (Barchan) famously known as shifting sand is being blown westwards

across the plains at an average of 15 meters per year

View beautiful and iconic symmetrical cone known as Mount Oldoinyo Lengai - this Maasai name for the still active volcano means “Mountain of God” where Visitors sometimes struggles up its steep slopes to visit the steaming, bubbling crater while most of them prefer to view it from the distance. It’s here in the whole world where you will be able to see the rare white natrocarbonatite Lava emissions.



Lolmalasin mountain- situated on the northern part of Ngorongoro, is the third highest peak in Tanzania that offer an inspiring, challenging landscape for trekkers.

Olmoti Crater - This shallow grassy crater is a source of Munge River, which pours through a notch in the Rim in a beautiful waterfall on its way to Ngorongoro crater. There is scenic and pleasant walk from Nainokanoka through the forest up to the top of the waterfall. Majestically, the crater stands at 3100 meters above the mean sea level.

Empakaai Crater - It is a six-kilometer wide beautiful caldera containing a natural forest and a deep lake, forming a really point of scenery where from the north and eastern side you can look out to a dramatic cone of active Volcano Oldoinyo Lengai mountain, the Great East African Rift Valley and Lake Natron. It is possible to camp in the rim and Hike down in the crater floor, With an armed ranger (An Armed ranger is necessary because of buffalos in forests of the rim).

The Nasera rock - Prehistoric people did camp in the Leaside of this

huge monolithic stand-alone stone, probably the largest known in the world! It is 100 meters high forming an interesting point for climbers and bird watchers.

Lake Natron - Colorful alkaline lake famous by plentiful of soda ash and hot springs, forms a major source of food for Flamingos thriving on growing algae. Lake Natron, which is just outside NCA borders, forms a largest breeding ground of Flamingos in East Africa.

The people of Ngorongoro

Culture and people of Ngorongoro form one of the important attractions that tourists, Anthropologists and Archeologists do not dare to miss when visiting Ngorongoro. Over thousands of years, a succession of the tribes of livestock keepers lived in and left the area, sometimes driven by other tribal groups.

The Maasai are instantly identifiable with their toga-like red blanket, ochre-dyed hairstyle and colorful beaded jewelry. The Maasai have inhabited NCA for about 200 years after forcing out the Datoga. Since then, the Maasai occupied the area and are living with the environment and wildlife in harmony. Due to their unique culture and customs they are among the best known African ethnic group.

The Maasai are sometimes considered rigid because they have managed to preserve their traditional way of life and they continue to practice their ancient customs and ceremonies, which has enabled coexistence with wildlife and the environment. Maasai proudly practice a traditional cattle-herding lifestyle. Today there are 88,000 Maasai living in the Conservation area with their herds of cattle, donkeys, goats and sheep. During the rainy sea-

son they move to the grasslands and they spend the dry season in the forest and on the mountain slopes. The Maasai are allowed to drive their livestock into the crater for water and salt but settlement is not allowed. Despite their firmness to preserve their culture, the Maasai are friendly, hospitable and therefore visitors are welcomed to visit the designated "Maasai bomas" which are scattered in the Conservation area.

The Datoga (Barbaig) are the Nilo-Hamitic speaking pastoralists who came to the area as earlier as 300 years before they were forced to leave out by the maasai. Their traditional culture is unchanged and unspoiled. Datoga are highly skilled in metalwork. A visit to Datoga communities can include seeing metal workers in action and an opportunity to obtain beautiful jewelry.

The Hadza believed to be the first inhabitants of NCA but were forced to move southwards on the shores of lake Eyasi and they still live a hunter-gatherer lifestyle and speak a language with clicking sounds in it. Today, the Hadza and Datoga live just outside the NCA, in the Lake Eyasi basin and beyond.







Cultural heritage of Ngorongoro

Ngorongoro Conservation Area has been subject to extensive archaeological research for over 80 years and has yielded a long sequence of evidence of human evolution and human-environment dynamics, collectively extending over a span of almost four million years to the early modern era. The overall landscape of the area is seen to have the potential to reveal much more evidence concerning the rise of anatomically modern humans, modern behavior and human ecology.





Three separate tracks of small brained early upright walking Hominid *Australopithecus afarensis* are found at **Laetoli** in the west of Ngorongoro crater, the hominid footprints tracks are preserved in Volcanic rock aged 3.6 million years old which represent the strongest evidence ever indicating our ability to walk upright since that period.

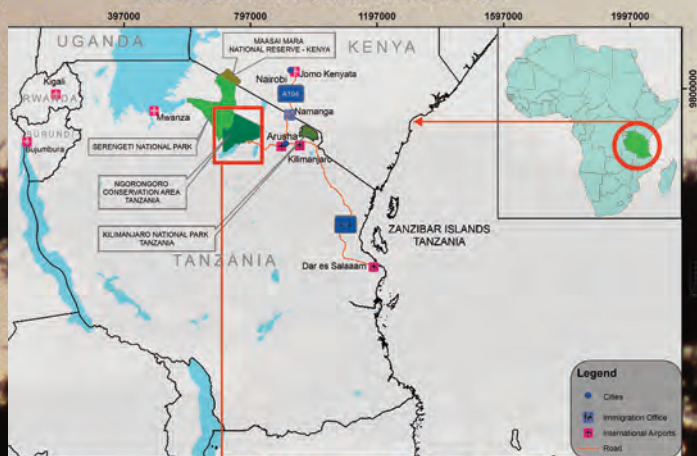
More advanced descendants of Laetoli's hominids were found at **Olduvai Gorge**, buried in the layers of the 100 metres deep! Excavations, mainly by famous Archeologist Louis and Mary Leakey yielded four different kinds of Hominids showing gradual increase in Brain size and corresponding complexity of their Acheulean stone tools with continuous inhabitation for over a million years.

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Investment opportunities with NCAA

NCAA has areas for investments sites at Njiro commercial complex in Arusha City, Kamyn Estate in Karatu District and some sites within Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCA) earmarked for development of lodges or permanent tented camps. For more information contact the Conservator of Ngorongoro.

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