



AGA KHAN TRUST FOR CULTURE

### **National Zoo of Mali inaugurated after full renovation by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture**



**Bamako, Mali, 20 June 2013** – The National Zoo of Mali was inaugurated today after 24 months of rehabilitation and expansion undertaken through a non-profit public-private partnership (PPP) led by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC).

The Minister of Environment and Sanitation, Mr Ousmane Ag Rhissa, and the Minister of Culture, Mr Bruno Maiga, were joined by Mr Luis Monreal, General Manager of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture, and Mr. Ferid Nandjee, Resident Representative of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) in Mali.

The newly renovated Zoo is now home to over 100 animal species, including 17 species of mammals, and features elephants, turtles, gazelles and primates. It also encompasses 21 species of birds, 13 species of reptiles and 58 species of fish.

Built over six hectares, the new Zoo recreates natural habitats that respect the needs of animals while following international zoo standards. The habitats include trees and hammocks for chimpanzees, a small forest and an artificial river for lions, and habitats specially designed for deer, buffaloes and ostriches. Newly created pathways lead to a large aviary, a new aquarium and a new vivarium.

In addition to providing a space for relaxation and leisure, the Zoo also functions as an indispensable tool for research, knowledge preservation and the conservation of animal species. Special attention has been given to the care of endangered African species in a bid to safeguard the genetic heritage of wild species.

The Zoo will also represent an important educational resource, particularly for school children in the capital, by providing information on animals and species, staging exhibitions, organizing meetings between trainers/facilitators and the public, running educational workshops and operating guided tours. Visitors will also have access to documentary screenings, readings and storytelling sessions.

The Zoo's opening follows the rehabilitation of the adjacent botanical park of Mali, opened in September 2010, which was also led by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture under the PPP signed with the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Environment and Sanitation. The PPP covers the construction, management, maintenance and development of the botanical and zoological parks ("National Park of Mali") over the next 25 years. The non-profit PPP reinvests any surplus revenue generated from the activities into the project. The 25-year agreement is meant to ensure that the National Park of Mali becomes self-sustaining rather than a burden on the municipality of Bamako.

Fifty jobs have been created for the management and maintenance of the Zoo and more than a hundred for the Botanical Park.

The National Park of Mali is part of a wider urban regeneration programme, implemented by AKTC, which includes several historical and cultural sites in Bamako, Mopti, Timbuktu and Djenne.

**For further information, please contact:**

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**NOTES**

The *Aga Khan Trust for Culture*, the cultural agency of the Aga Khan Development Network, undertakes a wide range of activities aimed at the preservation and promotion of the material and spiritual heritage of Muslim societies. Its programmes include the Aga Khan Historic Cities Programme, which works to revitalise historic cities in the Muslim world, both culturally and socioeconomically. Over the last decade, it has been engaged in the rehabilitation of historic areas in Cairo, Kabul, Herat, Aleppo, Delhi, Zanzibar, Mostar, northern Pakistan, Timbuktu, Djenne and Mopti. The Trust also supports the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology as well as [www.Archnet.org](http://www.Archnet.org), a major online resource on Islamic architecture. Its activities encompass the preservation and promotion of traditional music, through the Aga Khan Music Initiative, and the creation of museums and exhibition devoted to Islamic art.

The agencies of the AKDN are private, international, non-denominational development organisations. They work to improve the welfare and prospects of people in the developing world, particularly in Asia and Africa. While each agency pursues its own mandate, all of them work together within the overarching framework of the Network so that their different pursuits interact and reinforce one another. The AKDN works in 30 countries around the world and employs approximately 80,000 people. The AKDN's annual budget for non-profit development activities is approximately US\$ 600 million. The project companies of the Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development (AKFED) generate revenues of approximately US\$ 2.3 billion annually. All AKFED surpluses are reinvested in further development activities.

Read online at: <http://www.akdn.org/press-release/national-zoo-of-mali-inaugurated-after-full-renovation-aga-khan-trust-culture>