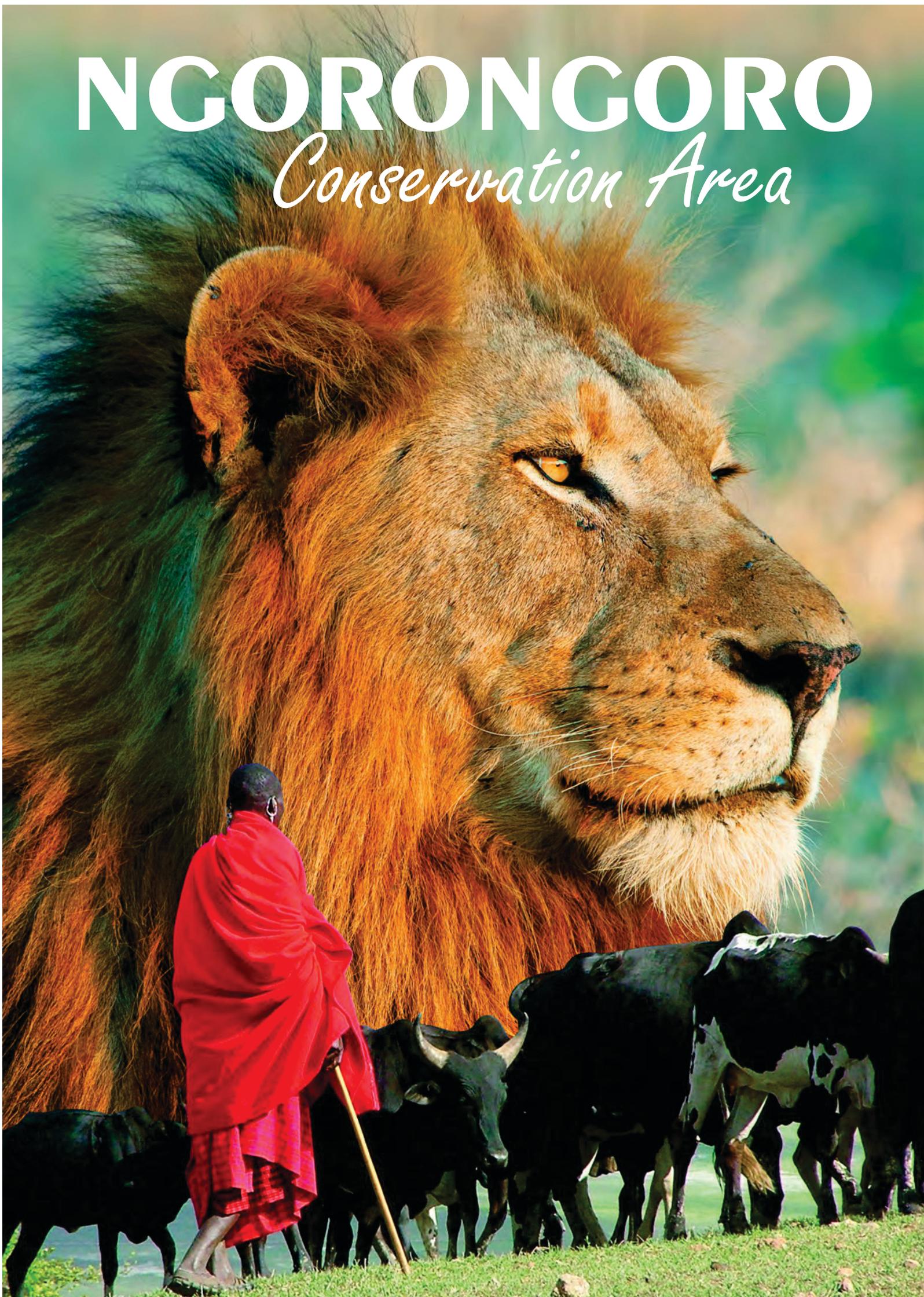


# NGORONGORO

*Conservation Area*



## **Introduction**

Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCA) is a **world-class tourist destination**. The area was established in 1959 as a multiple land use area, with wildlife co-existing 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 sq.km), 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**. Within **a span of 4 hours, a game drive** will reward you with the highest animal spotting in the world.



*The 7th Wonder of  
the World*





The road drive from Arusha to Ngorongoro Conservation is about **160 Km** of a good tarmac road. A safari to Tanzania **without a visit to Ngorongoro is not a safari**, for without so much to see of wildlife, geological and archeological wonders, it isn't worth calling it so.

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 rise 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.

# The Colors of Ngorongoro





## 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. They are unique, red-maned and bigger than their counterparts elsewhere

Ngorongoro harbors a range of endangered species, such as the Black Rhino, Wild hunting dog and Golden Cat. It is in the path 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.



## ***Great Migration Corridor***

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.



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.**

View beautiful and iconic symmetrical cone known as Mount Oldoinyo Lengai - this Maasai name for the 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. **In the whole world**, this is the place to see the rare white natrocarbonatite Lava emissions.



## A Unique People & Culture

Culture and people of Ngorongoro form one of the important attractions that tourists, anthropologists and archaeologists rarely miss on a visit to Ngorongoro.

**The Maasai** are instantly identifiable with their toga-like red blankets, ochre-dyed hairstyle and colorful beaded jewelry. They have inhabited NCA for about 200 years after forcing out the Datoga people.

Since then, the Maasai occupied the area and are living in harmony with the environment and wildlife. Today there are 88,000 Maasai living in the Conservation area with their herds of cattle, donkeys, goats and sheep. The Maasai are allowed to drive their livestock into the crater for water and salt but settlement is not.

**The Datoga** (Barbaig) are the NiloHamitic speaking pastoralists who came to the area as early as 300 years ago before being forced out by the Maasai. Datoga are highly skilled in metalwork. A visit to Datoga communities will find these metal workers in action and also get an opportunity to obtain beautiful jewelry

**The Hadza** also called *Hadzabe* are 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 similar to the San of Kalahari. Today, the Hadza and Datoga live just outside the NCA, in Lake Eyasi basin and beyond

