



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Digital animals in cyberspace generate real-world funding for wildlife conservation in South Africa

NEW YORK, NY - March 31, 2021 - Digital representations of animals in cyberspace are generating real-world impact for wildlife conservation. Thanks to the efforts of Wildcards, digital animals on the blockchain have now raised the equivalent of over US \$30,000 in cryptocurrency donations for Wild Tomorrow Fund's conservation work in South Africa.

Wildcards are unique digital wildlife assets, or non-fungible tokens (NFTs) which are created, managed and traded over the blockchain as smart contracts. NFTs have exploded in the news this month with the [staggering \\$69.3 million sale](#) of a digital artwork at Christie's auction house. These digital collectibles have no physical existence, but instead 'live' and derive proof of ownership and authenticity on the blockchain in cyberspace.

Each Wildcard is a digital artwork which, unlike a static artwork, continually generates funding for wildlife via an innovative 'harberger tax' mechanism - essentially a monthly donation paid by the owner of the Wildcard in order to continue to be the guardian of their digital animal. Donations generated by Wildcards are sent directly as Ether (ETH) coins across the blockchain to each charity's digital wallet in cyberspace.

This innovative, high-tech solution to generate funding for conservation was born at the Cape Town hackathon in May 2019. South African computer science graduates Denham Preen, JonJon Clark and Jason Smythe took their idea to realization with the support of two incubation labs in Paris and Switzerland. Wild Tomorrow Fund was proudly the first conservation partner to work with Wildcards when they launched in October 2019. Today, Wildcards digital animal tokens are generating funds for 26 conservation organizations around the world, including Wild Tomorrow Fund.

Vitalik, a digital gorilla, was the very first Wildcard to be born on the blockchain and to represent Wild Tomorrow Fund's wildlife in need of support and protection. He is named after [Vitalik Buterin](#), the creator of the Ethereum network and its virtual currency, Ether. While gorillas like Vitalik are not found in South Africa, other close primate relatives including baboons and the vervet monkey are, together with 46 mammal species, 300 birds, 20 amphibians and at last count 913 unique species in a precious array of biodiversity now protected at Wild Tomorrow Fund's Ukuwela Nature Reserve in South Africa. Vitalik is a symbolic representation of wildlife across the continent of Africa and the planet, and the similar pressures they face ranging from climate change to habitat loss and poaching. It is thanks to users in

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cyberspace who traded and held Vitalik that \$25,000 of the funds raised for Wild Tomorrow Fund so far will be put to use directly to help complete the land purchase for the wildlife reserve. This large donation is the equivalent of over 25 acres of land saved thanks directly to Wildcards and their tech-savvy supporters.

Wildcards also developed three digital hyena Wildcards in collaboration with Wild Tomorrow Fund's ecologists in support of the MunYaWana Spotted Hyena Project which has been exploring the decline of hyena in northern KwaZulu-Natal. Each digital hyena is named after a collared hyena that is part of the study, with cryptocurrency donations funding the GPS collar technology.

Wild Tomorrow Fund's co-founder & Chief Operating Officer, Wendy Hapgood, heads up the cryptocurrency strategy for the charity. Her former career in international electronic currency sales with Barclays and Citibank meant making the connection between conservation and cryptocurrency was not a big leap. "At Wild Tomorrow Fund, we believe that innovative technologies such as blockchain and cryptocurrencies have the potential to connect new audiences to conservation, changing how we interact with and join together as a global community to protect our planet's precious biodiversity" said Wendy.

"Crypto-enabled conservation is real," said Wild Tomorrow Fund's Executive Director, John Steward. "It truly is magic that a digital version of an animal is helping its real wild version using cutting-edge technology."

Jason Smythe, co-founder of Wildcards says, "At Wildcards we are inspired by the impact a passionate community of wildlife enthusiasts were able to have through a digital organisation. We look forward to building and improving wildcards so that it can sustainably connect communities to support organisations doing great work for conservation".

Crypto-philanthropists can use their Ethereum to adopt a wildcard animal and start raising funds for conservation at <https://wildcards.world/> or donate in cryptocurrency directly to Wild Tomorrow Fund's public wallets here www.wildtomorrowfund.org/contribute.

About Wild Tomorrow Fund. Wild Tomorrow Fund is a wildlife conservation charity dedicated to the protection of threatened and endangered species and the habitats they depend on for survival. Wild Tomorrow Fund works on the ground in southern Africa with a vision for a world in which wildlife habitats are expanded and protected for the benefit of people and the planet. For more information, please visit www.wildtomorrowfund.org.

About WildCards. Wildcards is a team of passionate environmentalists and technologists from South Africa, working on a meaningful social impact economy project powered by blockchain technology for wildlife conservation. Disrupting current donation models, they design engagement mechanics inspired by gaming and applying radical economics to the non-fungible token (NFT) market. Their platform allows their community to support conversation, become a guardian of endangered animals, or display and share their profiles, all in a social, gamified and transparent way.

Additional Media: Dropbox folder [here](#) with media including Wildcards NFT images and the wildlife these digital animals are supporting at Wild Tomorrow Fund's Ukuwela Nature Reserve in South Africa.