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OI Pejeta's ranching life started in the early 1940's with Lord Delamere, well-known as one of the first and most influential British settlers in Kenya. Throughout the colonial era OI Pejeta was a very successful beef ranch, but it is just as well known for the larger than life characters that owned and managed it during that time. One infamous owner was [Adnan Khashoggi](#), a billionaire Turkish-Saudi Arabian arms-dealer and businessman.

By the late 1960's, poaching in Kenya by colonial hunters had taken a serious toll on wildlife populations. Elephant and rhino numbers were plummeting, and although elephant hunting was declared illegal in Kenya in 1973, numbers continued to decline. This concerned one of OI Pejeta's previous owners, Lonrho Africa, who established the Sweetwaters Game Reserve in 1988 as a sanctuary for black rhino and other wildlife. Over time, the Game Reserve expanded to cover 90,000 acres – now OI Pejeta.

In 2003 OI Pejeta was purchased by [Fauna and Flora International](#), together with a generous benefactor. The day to day operations are undertaken by OI Pejeta Ranching Ltd, a commercial business that utilises agriculture and tourism to create surpluses wholly for reinvestment in conservation and community development.

OI Pejeta Ranching Ltd. is 100% owned by OI Pejeta Conservancy Ltd, which in turn is a 'Not-for-profit' as enshrined in its memorandum and articles of association. The company is governed by a voluntary board who draw no remuneration. 100% of funds generated must be used for OI Pejeta conservation and community development - there is no other person or institution that benefits from any surpluses made. The ownership of the land is also safeguarded within this.



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