



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

National Trust for the Cayman Islands raises US\$250,000 for Land Reserve Fund

28 March 2024 – A private event has raised US\$250,000 for The National Trust for the Cayman Islands Land Reserve Fund, its largest contribution to date. The event raised more than half the amount needed to purchase a piece of primary forest identified by the Trust so that it will be protected in perpetuity for future generations.

The fundraising dinner, organized and hosted by Karen and Chris Luijten on Friday 2 February in their South Sound home, was an elegant, Amalfi Coast inspired evening with a four course dinner creating a memorable evening for the 110 guests. Chef Vincenzo and Chef Carmine flew in from Positano to prepare the food using produce from the Luijten’s farm. Special thanks go to the Luijten family for not only hosting the event but also for covering all event expenses so 100% of the proceeds raised will go directly towards the land purchase.

The event was supported by Platinum Sponsors Wheaton Precious Metals and Kirk Freeport, Gold Sponsors Mercedes-Benz Cayman, Dart and KPMG along with other donors including Maples, Campbells and the Ministry of Sustainability and Climate Resiliency. Thanks go also to Patrick Bourque for his invaluable help in making this event a success.

The National Trust performs an important role protecting critically endangered ecosystems, plants and animals in the Cayman Islands by purchasing carefully selected parcels of land from private landowners to preserve the biodiversity of the three islands. The Land Reserve Fund was set up in 2010 to acquire and protect environmentally sensitive land. Land, which can be donated or acquired, is protected under the National Trust for the Cayman Islands Law and preserves critical natural habitats in perpetuity.

“There is a global initiative called 30 by 30 that aims to designate 30% of the earth’s land and ocean areas as protected areas by 2030” said Catherine Childs, Environmental Programme Manager, “We would like to see Cayman in the vanguard of countries meeting this target with the National Trust playing a key role in preserving our natural treasures for future generations.”



“The Trust recognizes the need to appeal for philanthropic donations to ensure the correct balance of preserving our natural biodiversity. We currently protect 6% of Cayman’s natural environment and we’d like to increase that amount to 11% across all three islands” said Melanie Carmichael, Chairman of the National Trust. “Together with the health and wellness benefits they provide to the community, these goals are vitally important as we strive to protect and sustain our environment for future generations. The success of this event is a clear indication that we are a community that cares and we are grateful to the Luijtens and to all our sponsors and supporters who have given so generously.”

To make a donation to the Land Reserve Trust and help us reach the target amount for this piece of land, visit <https://nationaltrust.org.ky/our-work/environmental/land-reserve-fund/> or contact director@nationaltrust.org.ky.

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For media enquiries, please contact Laura Butz, Marketing Manager, by email at marketing@nationaltrust.org.ky.

Photo captions: Photo by Blue Dot Studio. Guests from the left, Janet Walker, Bill Innes, Anne Dohms and Patricia Bradley.

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About the National Trust for the Cayman Islands

The National Trust for the Cayman Islands is a non-governmental organization whose mandate under the National Trust Law (2010 Revision) includes the preservation of the historic, natural and maritime heritage of the Cayman Islands for present and future generations.

About the Blue Iguana Conservation Programme

The Blue Iguana Recovery Programme began in 1990 with only 30 dedicated Blue Iguanas and the primary goal to restore the wild population to 1,000 Blue Iguanas, encouraging viable population in the long-term. Having met its primary goal in 2018, the initiative formally transitioned to the Blue Iguana Conservation Programme in 2019 with a new focus of sustainably conserving the native species of Grand Cayman.

About the National Trust's Environmental Programme

The National Trust for the Cayman Islands' environmental programme was founded on the concept that the protection of native plants and animals is best achieved by protecting the natural areas in which they depend.

About the National Trust Conservation Programme

The National Trust for the Cayman Islands' conservation programme strives to protect Cayman's native species and the habitats in which they live, and includes the endemic Blue Iguana of Grand Cayman, the Sister Islands Rock Iguana and Cayman's native bat species.

About the National Trust Historic Preservation Programme

The National Trust for the Cayman Islands introduced the launching of its *Historic Preservation Fund* at its Annual General Meeting in September 2021 for the purpose of inviting increased support of its continuing efforts to encourage the preservation and protection of historic homes and buildings for present and future generations of the Cayman Islands.