



## **mig33 encourages 40 million registered users to buy a virtual gift of an endangered animal and support World Environment Day (05 June)**

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**Immediate release**

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mig33, the world's largest mobile-first community, is encouraging its 40 million users across the globe to support World Environment Day on 05 June by sending virtual gifts of their favourite endangered animals to their friends, with proceeds going to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

"The UNEP's World Environment Day is a compelling celebration of positive action for the environment, with its support for endangered animals across the globe, says mig33 co-founder and VP marketing, Mei Lin Ng. "It dovetails with our focus on developing, mobile-first markets like South Africa, Southeast Asia, the Middle East and Eastern Europe. This is a great way to enable our global community to support their favourite endangered animals."

The 18 endangered animals supported by mig33 range from mountain gorillas in Rwanda, Africa, through tigers in Southeast Asia to the giant Panda in China. "We have chosen animals that are appealing and relevant to the geographical location of our users," says Ng. "It's a great way of creating awareness for our environment and contributing to saving endangered species. We know from our research that these are important issues for our community. However there are seldom easy ways for individuals to make a contribution, and that is what we are looking to provide."

The mig33 campaign will run from 01 – 12 June 2010, and users can choose which animal they would like to support by referring to mig33's description of the 18 chosen endangered species. They then buy virtual gifts of each animal at R0,90c each to send to their friends. mig33 will donate the net proceeds to UNEP.

Users need mig33 credits to send a virtual gift. In South Africa, they can obtain credits by buying a Ukash voucher at any Pick n Pay, Shoprite or Checkers store or from a merchant or via a bank transfer. Details are available online at [www.mig33.com](http://www.mig33.com) or [m.mig33.com](http://m.mig33.com) from a cellphone.



## Endangered animals

mig33 has chosen to support the following endangered animals for the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) World Environment Day (05 June):

1. **Mountain Gorilla:** UNEP is calling for people to Take A Stand for the Gorillas and to support the protection and conservation of gorillas in Rwanda – this year's World Environment Day global host country. The mountain gorilla is a critically endangered species with about 720 surviving in the wild.
2. **Black Rhinoceros:** Native to southern and east Africa. Fewer than 3,000 left, they are killed primarily for their horns, with animals poached and their horns used for medicinal purposes.
3. **Giant Panda:** Fewer than 1,000 remain in their native habitat of China due to loss of natural environment and poaching.
4. **Tiger:** These magnificent cats are native to Southeast Asia and the Russian Far East. Less than 6,000 tigers remain in the wild. The most urgent threat is poaching for body parts and bones.
5. **Beluga Sturgeon:** These ancient living fish fossils are found in the Caspian Sea. Poaching is rife due to excessive demand and high prices paid for their 'pearl-like' caviar.
6. **Alligator Snapping Turtle:** Prized by turtle trappers and dealers for its rare meat, the largest of freshwater turtles from North America, is quickly being depleted.
7. **Hawksbill Turtle:** Found mainly around tropical reefs, the one metre long species is becoming extremely vulnerable due to its slow reproduction rates and high volume of illegal trade for the prized jewel-like shell.
8. **Green-Cheeked Parrot:** Native to Mexico, this colourful parrot species has been significantly reduced in numbers due to huge demand as pet birds.
9. **Mako Shark:** Found all over the world, and highly sought for their tender meat and their shark fins which are used for medicinal purposes. The number of mako sharks has dropped is also due to the high volume of hunting for sport.
10. **Polar bear:** Under threat from reducing ice caps due to global warming in the circumpolar Arctic, the number remaining is fewer than 25,000.
11. **Borneo Pygmy Elephant:** There are about 1,000 elephants in the wild, mostly in the Malaysian state of Sabah and Northern Borneo. Their habitat is increasingly threatened by clearing land for farming.
12. **Black-Footed Ferret:** Native to the North American Great Plains and one of the most endangered mammals on the continent, this solitary and nocturnal animal numbers about 1,000.
13. **Golden-Headed Langur:** Native to North Vietnam, it is among the rarest primates in the world, numbering fewer than 70, due to extensive hunting.



14. **Javan Rhinoceros:** One of the most endangered large mammals in the world, with fewer than 60 animals existing in the wild in Java, Indonesia. They have been brought to the verge of extinction because of their use in traditional medicine and the loss of forest habitat.
15. **Pacific Walrus:** With Arctic ice melting, the Pacific walrus is experiencing habitat loss in Alaskan and Siberian waters. In 1990 some 200,000 animals were recorded, but their number has since been significantly depleted.
16. **Magellanic Penguin:** Once threatened primarily by oil spills, they now face a larger threat as fish are displaced by warming ocean currents, forcing the birds to swim farther to find food. Twelve out of the 17 penguin species are currently experiencing rapid population decline.
17. **Leatherback Turtle:** The largest marine turtle and one of the largest living reptiles, the leatherback turtle has survived for more than a 100 million years, but is now facing extinction, with as few as 2,300 adult females now remaining in the Pacific.
18. **Monarch Butterfly:** Every year millions of delicate monarch butterflies migrate south from North America to their winter habitat in Mexico, in what has been recognised as an endangered biological phenomenon.

#### **About mig33**

mig33 is the world's largest mobile-first community, providing social communications and entertainment for more than 40 million members and their mobile devices worldwide. With mig33, members in more than 200 countries engage in vibrant chat communities, share photos, send gifts, play games, post on each others' profiles, join groups, create avatars and much more. The service is available worldwide and optimised for more than 2 000 handsets. Founded in 2005, mig33 is backed by Silicon Valley venture firms Accel Partners, Redpoint Ventures and DCM. For more information, please visit [www.mig33.com](http://www.mig33.com) or [m.mig33.com](http://m.mig33.com) from a cellphone.

#### **MEDIA CONTACT**

Regine le Roux

Cell: 083 302 1528

E-mail: [regine@reputationmatters.co.za](mailto:regine@reputationmatters.co.za)