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THE ALBERTINE RIFT CONSERVATION SOCIETY RECEIVES MACARTHUR AWARD FOR CREATIVE AND EFFECTIVE INSTITUTIONS

Kampala, February 16, 2012 – Today the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation named the Albertine Rift Conservation Society (ARCOS) as a recipient of the MacArthur Award for Creative and Effective Institutions. The award recognizes ARCOS's work in championing collaborative conservation actions in the Albertine Rift region, one of the world's most important ecosystems on earth.

The MacArthur Award supports ARCOS's efforts to creatively address the pressing problem of rapid loss of habitat and genetic diversity and deterioration of community livelihoods by engaging various partners and stakeholders in the Albertine Rift region. ARCOS helps to enhance integrated management of biodiversity & ecosystem services; facilitate mechanisms for assessing and addressing climate change; and empower grass-root structures to participate in environmental governance and threat reduction.

"This award comes at a critical time for ARCOS Network. It will help us implement our new strategy effectively while becoming a more established, stable and prominent organisation," said Dr. Sam Kanyamibwa, the Executive Secretary of ARCOS.

The award is not only recognition for past leadership and success, but also an investment in ARCOS's future. ARCOS will use this generous infusion of support to build its Headquarters in Kigali—establishing both a head office and a Regional Information and Training Centre for NGOs and other institutions throughout the Albertine Rift region.

"From Chicago to Kampala, these extraordinary organizations demonstrate exceptional creativity and effectiveness," said MacArthur President, Robert Gallucci. "They provide new ways to address old problems. They generate provocative ideas and they reframe well-worn debates. And their impact is altogether disproportionate to their size."

ARCOS is one of only 15 organizations from six countries to be recognized today with the MacArthur Award for Creative and Effective Institutions. The MacArthur Foundation does not seek or accept nominations for these awards. To qualify, organizations must demonstrate exceptional creativity and effectiveness; have reached a critical or strategic point in their development; show strong leadership and stable financial management; have previously received MacArthur support; and engage in work central to one of MacArthur's core programs.

More information including an overview video about ARCOS is available at – www.arcosnetwork.org