

Critically Endangered Black Rhino Translocation to Botswana

June 2014 – Wilderness Safaris is delighted to announce the successful capture of 10 Critically Endangered black rhino in a joint collaboration with the Botswana and South African Governments. The rhino are currently being housed in bomas before being translocated to a safe haven in Botswana. This follows the successful capture and release of a group of black rhino last month and is part of an ongoing conservation project to establish a core population of this threatened species in Botswana.



One of the black rhino darted from the helicopter. After various procedures, the vet administers the antidote before the rhino is transported by container to the boma.

“We are extremely proud of the success of this translocation project and the ongoing positive impact Wilderness has made to rhino conservation in Botswana and further afield over the past 20 years. We are very confident that these animals will settle well and breed, given that the habitats available have been assessed as being perfect for black rhino,” says Wilderness Safaris Group Conservation Manager, Kai Collins. He added that Botswana offers a safe refuge for Endangered species with full support and backing offered from the Government and Department of Wildlife and National Parks to secure their safety from potential poachers.

The Wilderness Botswana Rhino Project is an ongoing partnership between Wilderness Safaris and the Botswana Department of Wildlife and National Parks. It was started in 2000 with the reintroduction of white rhino from southern Botswana into protected areas in the north of the country. Subsequent reintroductions of white rhino over the next five years increased the population substantially and the success of these rhino can be measured in the recruitment of calves born in the wild.

In 2003, a small group of south-central black rhino were introduced into the same area and a single calf was born in 2009. These highly threatened animals are known to have occurred in large numbers, possibly thousands in the mid-nineteenth century in the very area into which they have been introduced.

Thanks to extensive fundraising efforts in preparation for this translocation by the Wilderness Wildlife Trust and other important sponsors, including International Rhino Foundation and the Tiffany & Co. Foundation to name a few, the first part of the project has been a great success. “We look forward to completing the translocation process in the next few months and ensuring that these rhino are well looked after in their new home”, Collins added.

Ends

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About Wilderness Safaris: www.wilderness-safaris.com

Wilderness Safaris is an ecotourism company that specialises in memorable wildlife experiences in some of the most remote and pristine areas in Africa. In this way it offers its guests private access to three million hectares of Africa's finest wildlife reserves, while remaining fiercely committed to protecting our planet's precious natural and cultural resources. Recognising that conservation is as much about people as about the environment, the company has pursued important goals through its Children in the Wilderness programme, as well as through the Wilderness Wildlife Trust, which have helped change the face of nature-based tourism in Africa.

About Wilderness Wildlife Trust: www.wildernesstrust.com

The Wilderness Safaris Wildlife Trust supports a wide variety of approximately 30 projects annually in southern Africa, within the categories of wildlife management, research and monitoring, and community empowerment and education. These projects address the needs of existing wildlife populations, seek solutions to save endangered species and provide education and training for local people and their communities. For more than 20 years, the goal of the Wilderness Wildlife Trust has been to make a difference to Africa, her wildlife and her people.