

Mlevu
SANCTUARY

WE ARE HONORED TO HAVE THE EXPERT TEAM OF ECOLOGISTS AT THE MALILANGWE TRUST TO CHAMPION THE TRANSLOCATION OF THESE MAGNIFICENT ANIMALS TO THE NEWLY ESTABLISHED MLEVU SANCTUARY. AS WE CONTINUE SHARING UP-TO-DATE DETAILS ON THIS HISTORICAL MOVE, WE INVITE YOU TO BE A PART OF THE RHINOS' JOURNEY AND THEIR NEW LIVES AT MLEVU SANCTUARY.



September 2024, the new Mlevu Sanctuary is welcoming two rhinos of its own!



The arrival of Thuza and Kusasa at our first community rhino sanctuary at Ngamo in May 2022 sparked the interest of other communities along Hwange's southern boundary.



Three communities amalgamated their land adjacent to the Park boundary and allocated it to rhino conservation, creating the second community rhino sanctuary - the "Mlevu Rhino Sanctuary"

FOR WORLD RANGER DAY 2024, WE'D LIKE TO CELEBRATE OUR COBRAS COMMUNITY WILDLIFE PROTECTION SCOUTS WHO WILL BE PROTECTING MLEVU SANCTUARY'S TWO NEW RHINOS!

MLEVU SANCTUARY

The Cobras scout are excited to be welcoming two more white rhino to Mlevu sanctuary soon. Find out more about this here.

The rhinos have been identified by the expert team at the Malilangwe Trust. They were located and taken care of thanks to the great team of ecologists, vets and scouts during an exciting and complex operation last week. This involved locating the animals, darting and sedating them, monitoring their breathing and body temperatures, taking a small amount of DNA for future research purposes, dehorning the tips of their horns, loading them into crates (which for a 1500kg animal is no easy feat!), and then transporting them to their enclosed home for the next few weeks... Phew!

Since then the two rhino bulls have been "boma-ed" (or put in an enclosure) to be monitored over the next few weeks. They are given supplementary feed and are able to relax a little bit before their long trip ahead. The next few weeks are crucial to facilitating a swift translocation.

Rhino translocations need to be thorough, reactive and carefully planned to avoid anything going wrong. We are grateful to be able to partner with the Malilangwe team (the best experts in this field) and mitigate against any potential challenges.

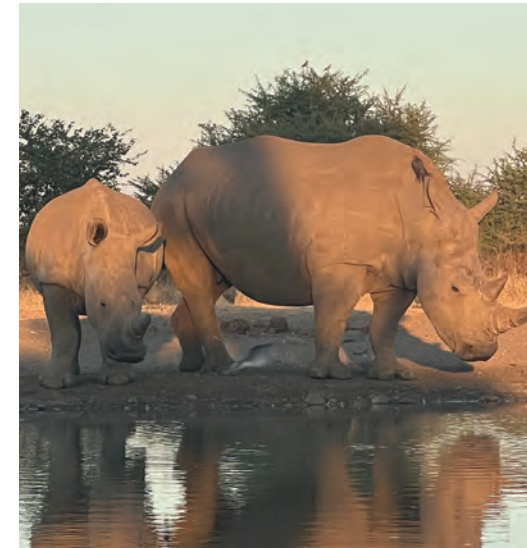
This entire operation is truly a cohesive team effort and on this special World Ranger Day, we'd like to celebrate our Cobras scout and the hard work they do to protect Hwange's community rhinos.

More news to come soon!
Follow this journey at #hwangecommunityrhino

BRIEF UPDATE: WHAT WE HAVE DONE AND WHERE WE ARE GOING.

The Tsholotsho Rhino Program operates in Hwange, Zimbabwe, within the Kavango-Zambezi (KAZA) transfrontier conservation area, where human-wildlife conflict is intense. The program, started in May 2022, focuses on reintroducing white rhinos to the region after they were poached out in the early 2000s. The program has successfully established the first community-led rhino sanctuary on communal lands, with 40 scouts protecting the rhinos. This initiative aims to boost tourism, create jobs, and fund community projects.

The program is now in Phase II, expanding to more community sanctuaries along the park's boundary. Future plans include the translocation of more rhinos, establishing a third sanctuary, and potentially expanding into southern Hwange. Successes so far include employment for over 60 locals, community education, tourist visits, and the establishment of a functioning human-wildlife conflict buffer zone. The program emphasizes community involvement, aiming to create a viable rhino population while benefiting local communities.



WATER4WILDLIFE TRUST

The Water4Wildlife Trust, based in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, received a \$100,000 grant from Shikar Safari Club International (SSCI) in October 2023 to support the Tsholotsho North Concession Rhino Program.

The grant was fully expended, aiding in the payment of salaries, food rations, and equipment for community wildlife protection scouts. It also enabled the completion of Sanctuary 2, which is now ready to receive more rhinos.

The program successfully achieved its objectives, including the establishment of Sanctuary 2 and the recruitment of more scouts. Community involvement has grown, particularly due to the effectiveness of electric fencing in reducing human-wildlife conflicts. The program also emphasized the need for ongoing research and community education to ensure sustainable rhino conservation.

Lessons learned include the high costs and time requirements for program expansion, the importance of community-paced involvement, and the need for continuous scout training. Future efforts will focus on community engagement, increasing tourism for program funding, and ongoing data collection.

The project involved key collaborations with Imvelo Safari Lodges, Matupula Pvt, Tsholotsho Rural District Council, National Parks, and the Malilangwe Trust, which were crucial to the program's success.

Financially, the program raised \$257,000 during the grant period, exceeding the projected \$120,000, with funds largely used to cover operational expenses and repay earlier loans. In-kind contributions included various supplies like uniforms, solar lights, and a basic drone. The report highlights the program's ongoing need for partner support to sustain its conservation efforts.