

# Rhinos translocated to an undisclosed location

A further thirteen black rhino have recently been translocated from Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife reserves to another property in northern KwaZulu-Natal. Since 2003, WWF's Black Rhino Range Expansion Project (BRREP) has helped create eight new populations in an effort to increase the number of critically endangered animals in South Africa. These populations reside in KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo on land totalling over 160 000ha.

"More than 130 black rhino have been moved to new homes, while over 40 calves have been born on project sites," says Dr. Jacques Flamand, the head of BRREP. Translocating rhinos requires dedicated, skilled teams, who constantly work to improve their translocation methods in an effort to reduce the stress caused to the animals.

## Best way to move rhinos

During the latest translocation blood samples were taken for testing to ensure that airlifting sedated rhinos for short distances by their ankles does not stress the animals at all. "We believe this is the best way to move rhinos as it does not compromise their breathing and reduces the distance and time they have to travel by truck over difficult terrain. While indications are that it does not harm the animals, we want to be absolutely sure," he adds.

Dr. Flamand has dedicated the last ten years to creating new populations to help boost black rhino numbers. "People have caused the decline in rhino numbers and, as people, it is up to us to reverse the trend. If we do nothing, they will disappear and I'd hate for that tragedy to happen in my lifetime."

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