

MEANWHILE IN BOTSWANA... RHINOS RELOCATED AWAY FROM POACHERS

At least three rhinos were poached since the aerial survey (*REF Journal*, Vol 7, Nov 1992) which highlighted the need to take urgent measures. Under the guidance of Natal Parks Board's crack rhino capture team, the Botswana Department of Wildlife and National Parks initiated Operation Rhino to save Botswana's last free-ranging rhino and to move them to a safe place.

In February 1993, two rhinos, a cow and a calf, and two days later a white rhino bull were captured and transported seven hundred kilometres to the Khama Rhino Sanctuary, established by an enthusiastic community of Botswana citizens in Serowe.

While the capture operation was in progress, poachers exchanged fire with Botswana game guards, and a three-year old bull was saved from death at the last minute by the game capture team bringing to four the number of rhino captured and relocated to the sanctuary. Unfortunately, the rhino wounded by poachers died four weeks later despite constant veterinary care.



Sawing off the bull's horn to reduce the risk of injuries during translocation.

The Rhino & Elephant Foundation committed itself to the funding of the holding facilities at the Khama Rhino Sanctuary as well as to additional feeding of the rhinos while in captivity over a protracted period of time. Special thanks to EPOL for generously sponsoring horse cubes for a six-month period.

COMPUTER NETWORKING FOR ANTI-POACHING ACTION

The tragic decline of Zimbabwe's black rhino has put South Africa on "red alert", preparing for an unprecedented wave of poaching to hit rhino sanctuaries throughout the country.

When monitoring a poaching incident, conservation agencies have turned to an unusual source: corporate and credit information.

KREDITINFORM operates and maintains a computer linked network. On hearing of a local conservation agency's needs for tracing those behind the financially-motivated slaughter of rhino, KREDITINFORM recently donated free access to their on-line system to the Foundation – a donation valued over R20 000.

By using the on-line network, new data can be added to existing records and then be



Pictures by 'Vere' van Herden, courtesy of Natal Mercury

NPB game capture team members Peter Openshaw, Peter Rogers and a game guard inspect a darted rhino in Chobe National Park. The massive bull was one of the four rhinos the team were able to capture in a bid to save them from international poaching gangs.