

Earth WATCH

BOTSWANA: TOURISM SPARKS NEW THREAT TO 'BUSHMEN'

"The government wants us to come to work for others and live lives of poverty and suffering," 'Bushman', Central Kalahari Game Reserve, February, 1996

Reports have reached Survival International (a worldwide support group for tribal peoples), that the Botswana government is preparing to relocate by force 1,000 'Bushmen' (also known as Basarwa) and Bakgalagadi (another Kalahari people) from their land in the Kalahari Desert. Another 3,000 people could be affected. There have also been disturbing claims that persons who have attempted to communicate with the international community have been arrested and detained without trial.

This relocation plan is the latest chapter in the troubled history of relations between the 'Bushmen' and a government which places tourism revenues above land rights. It is also a serious setback for land rights campaigners - in 1989, after a prolonged letter-writing campaign by Survival International, the Botswana government abandoned similar relocation plans for the Central Kalahari Game Reserve (CKGR). We argued that any real damage to the Kalahari came from large-scale cattle ranching, mining and tourism. The Botswana government has always claimed that nobody will be relocated against their will, but now it seems to be going back on its word.

The CKGR - a vast area of 52,000 kilometres, was set up in 1961, originally to protect the 'Bushmen' and Bakgalagadi and enable them to continue their hunter-gatherer way of life. But when they adopted small herds of cattle and started living in 'non-traditional' homes, the government claimed that they were endangering wildlife and were no longer a tourist attraction. But for the campaign mounted by indigenous organisations

and Survival International, the 'Bushmen' and Bakgalagadi would have been expelled from the CKGR and placed in government settlements elsewhere which are usually dismal places.

Then, as now, the government claimed that the 'Bushmen' and Bakgalagadi would benefit from relocation, but the people affected by these plans put it very differently. 'This is my place', said 'Bushman' Nyatsa Bogosi in 1989. 'Here I am able to plant, to hunt. If they take me somewhere else they will have to show me how to hunt, to live. I never said I wanted to move.'

Botswana's 50,000 'Bushmen' are spread throughout the country. They face widespread discrimination and are often treated as virtual serfs - the lowest rung on Botswana's rapidly growing economy. Survival International fears that the current BSE crisis in Europe will increase imports of beef from Botswana's cattle ranches where 'Bushmen' are used as cheap labour.

'Bushman' representatives attribute their marginalisation in Botswana to the 'de-tribalisation' that occurs when they are separated from their land. They fear that a similar fate awaits the 'Bushmen' and Bakgalagadi threatened with expulsion from the CKGR. Survival International condemns all attempts to compel the 'Bushmen' and Bakgalagadi to leave their land against their will and calls on the international community to join with us in upholding the land rights of Botswana's hunter-gatherer peoples.

MORE ELEPHANTS BROUGHT INTO MKUZI

The Natal Parks Board introduced a family unit of 12 elephants to the Mkuzi Game Reserve on Monday 22 July 1996

The elephants were captured in the Kruger National Park in the early morning and were transported directly to Mkuzi, accompanied by Natal Parks Board officers

John Llewellyn and Rob Blok, arriving at the temporary holding enclosure at 21:45 that night.

The animals then remained in a smaller enclosure for two days in order to settle down after their journey. After which they moved to a larger enclosure to acclimatise themselves to the Mkuzi environment.

They will join a group of 11 juvenile elephants which were obtained from the Kruger National Park and introduced into Mkuzi in July 1994.

The new group of 12 elephants consists of six females including a matriarch - four of which are lactating cows - and six males, one of which is a sexually mature bull.

Prior to the recent introductions, resident elephants were last seen in the Mkuze area in the late 1800s. A lone elephant was reported by the Natal Parks Board first Director, Col Jack Vincent, in 1964 and was probably a wanderer from Mozambique.

"We are monitoring the behaviour of the new elephants very carefully and although we do not anticipate any problems, we have made contingency plans to cope with any unusual situations that might arise," said Mr Tony Conway, Natal Parks Board Chief Conservator for Zululand. "We have consulted all our neighbouring communities and have their full support for this venture," he added.

The capture operation and transport was sponsored by KPMG Chartered Accountants and Business Advisors.

AUCTION OF BLACK AND WHITE RHINO

Clive Walker, Chairman of the Rhino & Elephant Foundation and of the African Rhino Owners Association (AROA) recently attended a game auction held at the Hluhluwe Game Reserve by Vleissentraal, on behalf of the Natal Parks Board. A total of 133 white rhino and six black rhino were auctioned. The black rhino, the highlight of the auction, fetched R150 000 each while the white rhinos fetched exceptional prices at an average of R43 000 and a high of R86 000.

Walker purchased three females on behalf of the owner of Lapalala Wilderness to boost their white rhino population. He was immensely impressed with the condition of the rhinos in the bomas and was particularly delighted that the six black rhino fetched such good prices. The purchase brings to seven the total number of private black rhino owners in South Africa. This is most encouraging, as the private owner is increasingly playing a major role not only in the conservation of white rhino - whose

numbers are on the increase - but also of black rhino.

Overseas buyers, particularly from Malaysia and Israel, expressed great interest in the auction and all 1 552 animals on offer were sold. The auction netted a total of nearly R9 million. The Rhino & Elephant Foundation was approached for assistance by the Zimbabwe Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management who were in urgent need of a fax machine for their Investigations Branch. We are pleased to report that Nashua donated a fax machine which has been forwarded to Zimbabwe.

REF (Rhino and Elephant Foundation), has also provided support for two university research projects. Adrian Shrader's project on "The Influence of White Rhino Density on the Movement Patterns of White Rhinos in the Low Density Sinks of Umfolozi", Department of Zoology and Entomology at the University of Natal. The purpose of the project is to assist the management staff of Umfolozi Park in assessing the sink management plan for white rhinos.

Bruce Page of the Department of Biology, University of Natal, has been assisted with his research on the elephant carrying capacity in the north eastern Tuli Block, Botswana, based on an assessment of their impact on woody vegetation. It is hoped that the results from this study will go a long way to providing a much-needed in depth understanding of the interaction between elephants and their habitats.

VIETNAMESE CAMPAIGN TO SAVE ASIAN ELEPHANT

A campaign has been launched in Vietnam to protect the country's few remaining elephants from poachers. Indigenous tribesmen will be recruited to form part of special ranger units. The Asian elephant is reported to be on the brink of extinction, particularly in Vietnam, where wild elephant numbers have been dramatically reduced by 75% since the 1970s.

BOWHUNTING THE DEBATE CONTINUES

A recent article by Hilton Hamman, featured an article on the pros of bowhunting, accusing "conservationists and tree-huggers" of being misguided in their condemnation of the sport. "An arrow kills as effectively as any bullet," Hamman claims. On the other hand - following discussions with the African Rhino Owners Association (AROA) - the Professional Hunters

Association of South Africa (PHASA) recently placed a moratorium on the bowhunting of elephant and rhino until further investigations are carried out.

We asked Marion Garai Chairperson of the Elephant Management and Owners Association (EMOA) and the REF elephant coordinator for her views on the subject.

The anatomy of the elephant does not lend itself to bowhunting. Elephants have very thick skins with a good muscle layer over their rib cages. Their ribs in turn are very strong and closely set, with very little muscle in between. Their lungs adhere to the ribcage and there is, therefore, no plural cavity in the chest - this means that their lungs will not collapse, so that blood loss is limited to within the lungs. In other words, an elephant shot through the lungs will die from drowning in its own blood. This is ethically unacceptable.

The elephant's heart is well-protected by the forelimbs and the chance of a direct shot to the heart with an arrow is remote. The death of an elephant pierced with an arrow will be a slow, drawn out process - and this is the norm rather than the exception. Where animals are not shot through the chest, their pain and subsequent death will be even more prolonged.

According to information presented by Deon von Wielligh of the Northern Province Department of Nature Conservation, there has been no successful bowhunting of elephants and rhinos recorded to date. Over 90% of attempts have ended in catastrophe, with the animal sometimes suffering up to a week of unbelievable pain. Similar results have been reported in Zimbabwe. Delegates of the EMOA workshop held in November last year Unanimously decided against bowhunting of elephants. The group was comprised mainly of conservation representatives, scientists and veterinarians. Strong support for this decision came from Dr Hymie Ebedes (an accredited South African wildlife consultant), and Dr Holly Dublin (Chairperson of the IUCN African Elephant Specialist Group) - it would obviously be inappropriate to talk of bunny-huggers in this instance. Private owners have subsequently fully supported the motion by EMOA to put forward a proposal for a moratorium. I do not believe that any serious, ethical hunter would consider bowhunting to be appropriate for elephants.

ARGUMENT FOR KILLING ANIMALS FOR A LIVELIHOOD

The Forum section of the October

28,1995 issue of the New Scientist carried an opinion piece by Fred Pearce in which he argued that there is really no distinction between supporting an aboriginal take of a few grey whales and supporting harvesting of seals by Norwegians.

Pearce said that, "the truth is that there are two sorts of environmentalists: those whose concern is animal rights and those more interested in people and in saving the planet for future generations". He says that the latter group focuses on sustainable development, in which anyone, industrialist or native, can utilize natural resources provided this is done equitably and sustainably.

Pearce posits that "most green groups gloss over these distinctions so as not to alienate large sections of their memberships. They do this by supporting aboriginal takes of small amounts, but objecting to everything else. He asks, "Where do you stop? 'Aboriginals' aren't alone in having cultures worth protecting. Or jobs. What about the Japanese islanders whose traditional trade is whaling? Or the Faroe Islanders whose bloody slaughter of pilot whales is deeply rooted in their culture and, say whale demographers, is entirely sustainable."

This desire to maintain both animal rights and sustainable development supporters has led some organisations to abuse science. He cites the sudden flip-flop of WWF over the elephants in 1989 as a prime example. WWF had backed sustainable use of elephants for the sale of their ivory as a reasonable incentive for conservation. But they suddenly changed course and came out in favour of banning all ivory trade, against the advice of experts, "but in the face of intense campaigning from animal rights activists in the US".

BIRTH OF THE BLACK RHINOCEROS CALF AT WESTERN PLAINS ZOO, DUBBO, AUSTRALIA

The baby, a male was born 25 May 1996 at 10h45. Its estimated mass was, approximately, 30 kg. It stood within 30 minutes of birth and suckled within first two hours.

The Sire - Siabuwe, estimated age, 8 years. Estimated mass, 1 000 kg. Caught in the wild in 1991, in Chete, Zimbabwe, transported to Fossil Rim Wildlife Centre, Texas, USA. Transported to WPZ, Australia, in November 1994. This is his second calf in captivity.

The Dam - Kalangwizi estimated age, 13 years. Estimated mass 1 000 kg. Caught in



Earth WATCH



the wild in 1992, in Chete, Zimbabwe, arrived at WPZ, Australia, in February 1993. This is her first calf in captivity.

Other details are that early pregnancy was diagnosis at 3 months (12 months prior to parturition) made possible by new technology - faecal hormone levels particularly progesterone levels. Kalangwizi was mated twice - 4 February 1995, 6 March 1995. Did not return in season as expected in April. Therefore predicted birth date around end of May 1996. Started to display mammary gland development 3 weeks prior to birth. Relaxation of vulva noticeable 72 hours prior to birth.

The mother and calf appear to be doing well.

NEW CONCEPT IN RAISING FUNDS FOR RHINO CONSERVATION

Save The Rhino International has been Operating in the UK for six years, and has raised over R2 500 000 for rhino conservation projects in Asia and Africa.

The charity was born when David Stirling and Johnny Roberts, both 24 at the time, returned from two years of travelling and

working in Africa. The "Rhino Scramble", motorcycle expedition from Nairobi to London was the first fund raising event and its success led David and Johnny to believe that there was more they could do for the world's devastated rhino population.

When a friend approached them with the idea of running the London Marathon in a large rhino costume, they said "Fine. As long as you wear it!" The costume had been designed by famous caricaturist Gerald Searle for an opera production and had never been intended for any other use - was now about to embark on a new career.

William Todd Jones completed that first marathon in over six hours, wearing a pair of hard office shoes just to add to his already significant challenge. The response was incredible - a novel and exciting concept in fund raising was born and Save The Rhino had discovered its greatest asset.

Since that first race, the rhino has run in 14 international marathons with a new face inside, entertaining the crowds each time. Hundreds of runners have joined the SR team, and each has raised R5 000 in personal sponsorship, thus marking this a highly successful form of fund raising.

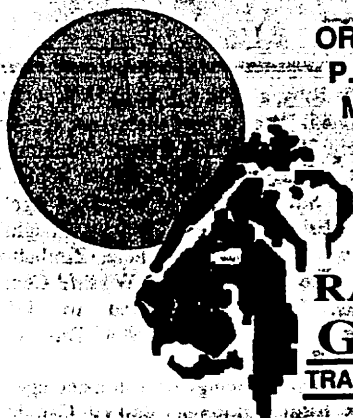
From its grounding as a marathon runner the costume has taken on increasingly more exciting challenges and entertained follow-

MAKE A CAREER AS A GAME RANGER

**QUALIFYING TRAINING
COURSES NOW AVAILABLE**
Come learn about the bush in
BIG FIVE country with our highly
experienced Instructors / Guides
FOR MORE INFORMATION PHONE:

(0142) 74-3513

OR WRITE TO:
P.O BOX 188
MOOINOOI
0325



**RANGER
GUIDE
TRAINING SCHOOL**

PLANNING YOUR NEXT HOLIDAY ?

- 24 day South Africa to Kenya Safari
Victoria Falls - Luangwa National Park
Lake Malawi - Zanzibar - Serengeti - Ngorongoro
R3595 + local payment USD 375
- 22 day "Southern Cross Safari"
Kalahari - Fish River Canyon - Namib Desert - Okavango -
Chobe - Victoria Falls - R4295
- Zimbabwe Safaris including Zambezi River canoeing.
8 days - R2595
15 days (including Victoria Falls) - R4295
- Namibia/Etoshia Safaris
15 days - R3595
- Botswana/Okavango/Victoria Falls Safaris
7 days (excl Vic Falls) - R2495, 12 days - R4195,
15 days - R4395
- Private groups - "Tailor made safaris"
Botswana - Okavango - Kaokoland - Zambezi
You can arrange your own group from 6 persons.
Please contact our safari consultants for details.
- Comfortable Karibu-style camping * excellent bush cuisine
* professional, experienced guide & camp assistant
* spacious, comfortable vehicles * small, friendly,
cosmopolitan groups * A wonderful holiday for the nature lover!



For immediate details and a brochure
Tel: (031) 839 774 or (011) 462 6414
Fax: (031) 831 957
Karibu Safari: PO Box 35196
Northway, 4065, South Africa

ers at festivals and schools, at exhibitions and on the streets.

The 1994 climb up Mount Kilimanjaro proved its single biggest challenge and it became the first rhino to scale the snowy peak. The journey brought great joy to the villages en route from Mombassa and the R350 000 that was raised is still being spent on adding classrooms to village schools in the Tsavo area, with the rhino costume playing a valuable role in community conservation education.

In allocating funds, time spent in Africa has proved invaluable and David and Johnny have been able to work closely with field operators in Zaire, Namibia, and throughout East Africa.

Namibian desert rhino are now the focus of an exciting new project. The Namibian Black Rhino Fund is a blueprint capital fund as the first of five £1 million umbrella funds for the world's rhino species. Annual return from the funds will provide secure long-term funding for field operators.

The expansion of Save The Rhino has led to the opening of an office in Cape Town, run by Ben Harbour and Shani Glover, where the response to the running rhino has again been overwhelming. Entries to the Comrades, the Argus Pick 'n Pay Cycle Tour and a dramatic TV finish to the Two

Oceans have made the costume a familiar figure to the South African public.

POACHING FIGURES FOR SOUTH AFRICA'S RHINOS

In South Africa, between 1990 and late 1995, six black rhinos (*Diceros bicornis*) and 27 white rhinos (*Ceratotherium simum*) were lost to poachers in areas managed by the Natal Parks Board. Of the 66 horns to be accounted for (two per animal), a total of 26 were either recovered, had not been removed from the animals or had been lost by natural causes. Estimating an average mass of 3,5 kg per horn, some 140 kg of rhino horn remain unaccounted for. In a few of the poaching incidents, small pieces of skin had been removed from the dead animals.

A total of 32 rhinos were poached during the same period in Kruger National Park, and 13 in the Transvaal region. This represents a total of 71 white rhinos and seven black rhinos. South Africa has not conducted a programme of dehorning its rhino population.