

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO THE RHINO & ELEPHANT FOUNDATION FOR THE PERIOD APRIL 1995 TO MARCH 1996



During the period March 1995 to August 1996, the Rhino & Elephant Foundation's offices continued to be located in Rembrandt Park, under the management of Rozanne Savory and Petra Mengel. Vice Chairman John Ilsley devoted considerable time and energy to REF's affairs during this period. This was a difficult stage in REF's history, largely due to the downturn in fundraising which generally affected all NGOs in South Africa. While REF was not in a position to support as many projects as it would have liked, it nevertheless provided assistance and continued to act as a centre point for rhino conservation in many areas of Africa.

From October 1995 to the end of the financial year, REF's affairs and administrative headquarters underwent changes. Its headquarters moved back to the offices of the Wilderness Trust of Southern Africa, which very kindly provided accommodation through to the end of the financial year, at no cost. In addition, Rozanne Savory resigned and took up a position assisting the National Parks Board of South Africa

with fundraising for elephant conservation, while Petra Mengel left to take up a position with Save the Rhino Trust in Namibia. Heather Cowie, Secretary to the Chairman and Secretary of the Wilderness Trust of Southern Africa, was appointed Executive Officer of REF. We would like to thank the Wilderness Trust for providing accommodation and financial accounting through the offices of Kingsley Cowie headed by Jann Kerr, a Trustee of the Wilderness Trust.

At the commencement of the new financial year in March 1996, the Boards of the Rhino & Elephant Foundation and of the Wilderness Trust of Southern Africa agreed to employ a joint Public Relations/Marketing Officer and Monique Verduyn joined the organisations in March 1996.

REF's activities were varied and a major event was the staging of the Elephant Debate which took place in May 1995 in Midrand, and was extremely well attended. Financial support for this event was provided by REF and support was also received from Avis Rent A Car, Nedcor Bank Limited, Drake International and The Theatre on the Track. The Debate took place between the National Parks Board and the non-governmental organisation FALCON, and was chaired by Rupert Lorimer.

During the year under review, the Chairman served on the following committees and continues to do so:

- Rhino Management Group
- Rhino Management Group Security Committee
- African Elephant Specialist Group
- African Rhino Specialist Group
- Chairman of the African Rhino Owners Association (AROA)

REF provided assistance with travelling expenses and accommodation for the Chairman's attendance at various workshops and meetings held by these organisations.

AROA was formed in 1994, primarily for the private landowner with rhinoceros populations. The committee consists of ten members who hold meetings on a regular basis to further the aims and objectives of AROA, which include:

- to promote the conservation and protection of

both species of African rhinoceros on private land throughout Africa

- to promote high standards of ethics and proper management in the utilization of the species
- to work towards the training and upliftment of the rangers and scouts whose job it is to protect rhinos in the field

Through the provision of editorial and secretarial assistance from REF, AROA produces quarterly newsletters for its members. REF, in conjunction with AROA, held an important workshop in November 1995, entitled "Sustainable Use Options for Rhino Management," which was attended by major governmental and non-governmental stakeholders.

REF is a member of the World Conservation Union (IUCN), and also networks with various conservation agencies, and provides ongoing advice and information to the media, schools and non-governmental organisations.

Funding

During the year under review REF provided financial assistance for the following projects:

- Elephant Debate – May 1995
- Game Rangers Training Co-Ordination Workshop – August 1995
- The Elephant Management and Owners Association – REF also continues to assist with the secretariat of EMOA, which it has done since the organisation's inception. A monthly grant is provided to the Chairperson of EMOA, Marion Garaï, who also receives assistance from REF for the maintenance and running expenses of her vehicle
- The African Rhino Owners Association likewise continues to receive assistance from REF
- Workshop on "Sustainable Use Options for Rhino Management" – November 1995. The workshop was held at the National Parks headquarters and REF and AROA provided the secretariat and sponsored the lunch for the delegates
- REF sponsored an amount of 50 Rhino Watch T-Shirts, earmarked for rangers and scouts in the field of rhino conservation, as a morale-



boosting exercise. This was organised in conjunction with the Game Rangers Association of Africa

- African Elephant Specialist Group (IUCN) Meeting – February 1996. REF provided administrative and financial assistance for this meeting
- REF provided assistance for the Chairman's attendance at the Game Rangers Association of Africa Annual General Meeting held in March 1996 at Cape Vidal, where he had been invited to present a paper
- In conjunction with AROA, REF initiated a survey of rhinos on private land, following earlier surveys conducted by REF in 1987 and by Richard Emslie in 1994. The 1996 survey was conducted by Daan Buijs of the African Wildlife Management Unit of the ARC-Range and Forage Institute, who was assisted by Theo Papenfus. Financial support for the survey was received from the Mazda Wildlife Fund, Thabo Tholo, the Natal Game Marketing Association, WWF International (Dr Holly Dublin), the Japan Wildlife Research Centre, and Shikar-Safari Club International.

In conjunction with Save the Rhino International, REF is also seeking to shift its emphasis away from direct protectionism to community-based rhino and elephant conservation, in line with general developments in conservation.

While the following do not fall within the year under review, they are indicative of REF's ongoing and expanding activities:

- REF secured the donation of a fax machine from Nashua Limited for the Investigations Branch of the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management in Zimbabwe
- Support for Adrian Shrader from the University of Natal (Department of Zoology and Entomology), for his research into "The Influence of White Rhino Density on the Movement Patterns of White Rhinos in the Low Density Sinks of Umfolozi"
- Support for Bruce Page from University of Natal (Department of Biology), for his research into the elephant carrying capacity in

the north-eastern Tuli Block, based on an assessment of their impact on woody vegetation.

Newsletters

REF sent out two newsletters during the year under review. However, this situation has been improved following the organisation's transitional period, and the employment of a Public Relations and Marketing Officer who produces all in-house editorials for REF. REF has undertaken to issue quarterly newsletters and one journal per year and also produces the newsletter for AROA.

The Chairman is on the editorial committee of *Pachyderm*, the official journal of the Species Survival Commission of the IUCN. In addition, the Chairman regularly submits material to the medical publication *Diversions*.

Acknowledgements

REF would like to express its gratitude to Harald Grapentin, Editor of *Diversions*, and to Sean Houghton for featuring an excellent article on REF in *African Panorama* during 1995. It is through this medium and that of radio and television that REF has gained maximum exposure over the years. We would like to thank all our friends in the media for their ongoing support.

We would also like to thank all our corporate, individual and field members, a total of 531, whose support is invaluable to REF. Our corporate members to date include:

- Alusaf Limited
- Anchor Trademark and Technology Trust
- The Assore Chairman's Fund
- Avis Rent A Car
- The Boots Company (S A) (Pty) Ltd
- Caltex Oil (S A) (Pty) Ltd
- Carlton Paper of S A (Pty) Ltd
- Chromecorp Holdings Ltd
- Edgars Stores Limited
- Elliott International
- First National Bank of S A Limited
- General Food Industries (Pty) Limited
- Guillemot Business Forms (Pty) Ltd
- Gulf Steel (Pty) Ltd



- Interleisure Limited
- Kenochem cc
- Kwalata Game Ranch
- Land Rover (South Africa) (Pty) Ltd
- Mabula Game Lodge
- Malbak Limited
- M I B Aidec (Pty) Ltd
- M I B Group (Pty) Ltd
- Mokolo River Nature Reserve
- Murray & Roberts Holdings Ltd
- Mutual & Federal Insurance Company
- Nedcor Bank Limited
- Nu-World Industries (Pty) Ltd
- Pick 'n Pay
- Pretoria Portland Cement Company Limited
- Rattray Reserves
- Richards Bay Minerals
- S A Breweries: Beer Division
- S A Philips (Pty) Ltd
- Sable Ranch
- Safmarine & Rennies Holdings Limited
- Sappi Limited
- Sasol Limited
- The Felix Schneier Foundation
- Seacargo (Durban) cc
- Standard Bank Foundation
- Standard Bank of S A (Gauteng Province)
- T W Industrial Valves cc
- Telinject S A
- Toyota S A
- Tudor Griffiths Transport Ltd
- Umgeni Water

Our grateful thanks also goes to all our other supporters who are too numerous to mention.

Board of Trustees

I would like to thank the Board of Trustees, our President, Dr. Mangosuthu Buthelezi, and our Patrons, Dr. Ian Player and David Shepherd OBE, for their continued commitment and support over the years. I would especially like to thank John Ilsley who had to step down from his position as Vice Chairman during the year under review, but remains a Trustee of REF. His input and supervision of REF's affairs has been

invaluable. Thank you also to our Advisors upon whose input and guidance we rely heavily. Finally, a special thank you to Peter Hitchins, Dr. Anthony Hall-Martin, Dr. Holly Dublin, the Honourable Richard Emslie and Ian Whyte for their assistance.

As the current Chairman of the African Rhino Owners Association, I would like to express my gratitude to the Executive Committee for their support and contribution which has enabled AROA to go from strength to strength over the past year: Lente Roode, Tilman Ludin, Dr. Kobus du Toit, Daan Buijs. Dave Albert, Erwin Leibnitz, Karel Landman, Jimi Malan and Dr. Johan Joubert.

Auditors

The Board of Trustees would like to express their gratitude to Deloitte & Touche who have given of their time and expertise over the years, in an honorary capacity.

Staff

Thank you to Rose Smith and especially to Heather Cowie for their valuable assistance in the day-to-day affairs of the organisation. We also extend a warm welcome to Monique Verduyn and Marion Garaï.

COMMENT

In a changing society, raising funds for rhinos and elephants is becoming increasingly difficult in the face of pressing human needs. However, we should not forget our responsibility to the species that share Planet Earth with us. In our desire to redress the iniquities of South Africa's past, we may be in danger of overlooking the needs of our rhino and elephant populations: their habitats and the enormous role they play within African eco-systems, and the benefits they provide by sheer virtue of their mega-fauna importance, has a direct bearing on the well-being of humankind. An African world devoid of rhinos and elephants would, in many respects, be a world that is sadly lacking.