



DONATION OF 10 WHITE RHINOS TO THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC)

September 2018

The Government of Zimbabwe through the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority is donating 10 white rhinos to the Democratic Republic of Congo to enhance rhino regional conservation program. According to IUCN Rhino Specialist Group 98% of world's white rhino population occurs in just four countries worldwide and that is South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe and Kenya. Thus, Zimbabwe is one of the major white rhino range states hence a source country for rhino range expansion to other countries or private stakeholders.

The translocation is being done adhering to local and international wildlife translocation protocols particularly IUCN rhino pre-translocation guidelines and the African Rhino Range States' African Rhino Conservation Plan. The translocation is being done for the following reasons:

1. Contribution to African Rhino Range States' African Rhino Conservation Plan through Expanding the Rhino Range Area

Zimbabwe as a major rhino range state, and in line with the African Rhino Range States' African Rhino Conservation Plan, is translocating the rhinos in an effort to expand the regional rhino range area. The expansion of national and regional rhino range areas is one of the goals of the African Rhino Conservation plan. The exercise is a deliberate effort to enhance the security and genetic proliferation of the species at a regional level.

2. Evidence of Zimbabwe's Rhino Conservation Successes

Zimbabwe is one of the important rhino range countries in the world and has seen steady population growth of both white and black rhinos. In the recent past, Zimbabwe has been instrumental in restocking of new and rehabilitated former range areas such as the Okavango Delta of Botswana. Eight (8) black rhinos were sent to the Okavango Delta in 2016 as part of the 20 country to country rhino donation to Botswana. The regional restocking exercise done by Zimbabwe is important in showing the goodwill and rhino conservation success story synonymous with the country.

3. Poaching and Security Status of Rhinos In the DRC

The Zimbabwean Government is aware that DRC lost its Northern white rhino population to extinction largely due to poaching. However, for this exercise, a management and scientific assessment of the security and law enforcement status and potential biological proliferation of the rhinos was done to inform the translocation requirements. Since the Northern white rhino went extinct in the DRC there are no fears of gene dilution with the rhinos intended to be translocated from Zimbabwe (Zimbabwe's rhinos are Southern white rhinos). The security and law enforcement status of the receiving property was assessed based on the local (Zimbabwe) and international (IUCN guidelines) standard pre-translocation requirements. The

Zimbabwean Government was satisfied that the pre and post-translocation conditions in DRC met the requisite standards for a successful re-establishment of rhinos in that country.

4. Sources of the Rhinos

The 10 rhinos are being translocated from three different sources (Lake Chivero and Kyle Recreational Parks and Matopo National Park). Rhinos at Lake Chivero and Kyle have reached near ecological carrying capacity and the translocation is part of destocking in line with our approved National Rhino Conservation and Management Strategy.