

GEORGE ADAMSON WILDLIFE PRESERVATION TRUST

**REPORT ON THE BLACK RHINO TRANSLOCATION FROM
PORT LYMPNE WILD ANIMAL PARK, UK
TO MKOMAZI RHINO SANCTUARY, TANZANIA**

JUNE 2012

On 17th June 2012 at 0700 hours, a dedicated DHL 757 aircraft carrying the three black rhinos, donated by The Aspinall Foundation to the Mkomazi Rhino Sanctuary, touched down at Kilimanjaro Airport.



Kilimanjaro International Airport authorities and freight handlers



Dr Peter Morkel on arrival

Grumeti, Zawadi and Monduli were under the care of Dr Peter Morkel and the rhino keepers Berry White and Claire Lupton.

A BBC film crew was on board to film the translocation for world news and the Today programme. Tony Fitzjohn, Bernard Mchomvu (the Chairman of the Trust in Tanzania), the British High Commissioner Diane Corner and her husband Peter Stocker, our Trustee Kinemo Kihomano, Blaise de Souza, the MD of DHL in Tanzania, Dr Chuma from TANAPA, and Mark Cheruiyot and Wilson Njue of the Kenya Wildlife Services were amongst the party assembled to greet the new arrivals.



British High Commissioner to Tanzania, Diane Corner, with the Chairman of Wildlife Preservation Trust Fund, Bernard Mchomvu and BBC producer, Natalie Morton



Dr Idrissa Chuma, Veterinary Officer in charge of Northern National Parks TANAPA and David Koyya, Manager, Swissport Tanzania

The Royal Patron of Tusk Trust, HRH The Duke of Cambridge, had been to see the rhinos at Port Lympne Wild Animal Park before their journey and had spoken out about the dramatic and devastating upsurge in rhino poaching.

Charlie Mayhew of Tusk Trust had approached DHL to see if they could offer any support to this translocation and they most generously offered to donate the entire flight. This was an extremely benevolent gesture to a species that needs all the help it can get. The 757 aircraft was a spectacular sight with a black rhino painted along its side.

The rhinos were off-loaded onto the waiting lorries loaned to us for the day by Grumeti Reserves, TANAPA and Frankfurt Zoological Society.



After a long onward journey to Mkomazi National Park in a TANAPA motor calvacade, they finally reached the holding compounds in the afternoon. Pete Morkel, Berry and Claire had done a fantastic job and the rhinos had travelled very well. The Rhino Sanctuary personnel were ready to greet them and off-load them and our sincerest thanks to the Suzuki Rhino Club for all their support of the day to day operations of this Rhino Sanctuary and for enabling us to get it all prepared to receive the rhinos. Swordspoint Foundation, Save the Rhino, Chester Zoo, Friends of Serengeti Switzerland, the Rufford Foundation, the Friends of Mkomazi and the Millars have also done much to help.





During their journey into Mkomazi National Park, the VIPs had already gathered close to the Mkomazi Rhino Sanctuary to welcome the rhinos to Tanzania. The Minister for Natural Resources and Tourism (Hon. Khamis Kagasheki), the Chairman of the Board of Trustees (Mr Lililiungulu), the Director General (Alan Kijaze) and managers and wardens of Tanzanian National Parks (TANAPA), the Director of Wildlife (Paul Sarakikya) and the Regional and District Commissioner all gave speeches of thanks to Damian Aspinall and Amos Courage of The Aspinall Foundation for the donation of the three rhinos to the Mkomazi Rhino Sanctuary; and to the George Adamson Wildlife Preservation Trust for all the many years of work in Mkomazi and for constructing, stocking and managing the Rhino Sanctuary. The British High Commissioner, Diane Corner, also gave a speech.





As the lorries passed by the VIP tents, they stopped for a few minutes for the formal procedure of the handover from the British High Commissioner to the Minister for Natural Resources and Tourism. The lorries then carried on to the Rhino Sanctuary.



The rhinos were off-loaded in record time. Each rhino took only a few minutes to cautiously walk out of its crate and into the new holding compounds.







They have settled down very well and have quickly adjusted to the Mkomazi browse. Browse is collected for them twice a day by tractor and trailer and they are also munching their way through the lucerne, horse pellets, carrots, bananas and sweet potatoes. Berry and Claire are helped at the 'bomas' by Penieli, Hassan, Evans, Dickson and Emmanuel, all of who have been involved in rhino translocations before. Rhino Sanctuary guards are close by at all times as is the Rhino Sanctuary Manager, Semu Pallangyo. They have worked out the best holding sections for each rhino and a daily routine has been established. They are visited on most nights by James, a resident bull, who gets as close as he can before the guys warn him off.



On Saturday, Pete Morkel fitted their horn transmitters and their ears were notched for ID. This operation went extremely well.





Two days ago, Monduli (the bull) was let out of his holding compounds and he ventured into the reintroduction area (fenced with an electric fence). He had a good look around for a couple of hours before returning to his compound. He ignored the mud wallow that had been prepared, but yesterday, he spent the whole day out in this reintroduction area and ventured into the thick vegetation for some time. Berry and Claire are now repeating this process with Grumeti and Zawadi (the females) and will start to bring them out together when they judge it to be the right time.

The rhino translocation went very smoothly and this is thanks to the wonderful generosity of all those who supported it either at the forefront or in the background, and the many combined years of experience of everyone who was involved. The three rhinos look in good shape and we hope that the next few weeks go well.

