



Dear Rhino Owners and Reserve Managers

April 2017

After all the activities around CITES last year, I anticipated the first quarter of 2017 would be a bit quieter, but to the opposite as we have been busy on a number of fronts as detailed below. I will report on the outcomes of our AGM as well as developments on a future trade possibility within this News Letter, but would firstly like to welcome 11 new PROA members.

2016 was again a tough year with a reported 17% increase in poaching incursions, but despite this heightened onslaught the number of poached rhino came down to 1 054 animals (vs 1 175 lost in 2015) of which 160 were killed on private reserves last year. What is noteworthy is that despite the private reserves now owning over 33% of the national herd, only 15 % of the losses occurred in the private sector. This demonstrates that with little to no assistance the private reserves are playing an increasingly important role in rhino conservation (in 2014 we owned 15% of the national herd)



AGM

Our AGM was held on the 23rd March at the Ranch Hotel as part of the WRSA conference. Per Special Resolution our MOI was adopted ensuring corporate compliance. Per Ordinary Resolution; our AFS were approved, the Board of Directors appointed and the PROA Rhino Horn Trade Proposal unanimously adopted. Thanks to all of you who attended or sent proxies.

I would like to welcome the new board of directors who will serve for the next two years and thank them for their time and support; Angus Sholto-Douglas, Dusty Joubert, Gus



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van Dyk, Hennie Gous, Pelham Jones, Izak du Toit, Riaan Crous, Rubin Els, Simon Naylor, Wicus Diedricks. Special advisors (security) Trevor Roberts and Li Lotriet (scientific) Dr Mike Knight.

Our appreciation to Izak du Toit for all assistance received to ensure corporate compliance and our accountants ML Accounting for all pro bono work



Chairman's Report for period ending 31st December 2016

"Before we begin I must record thanks and give recognition to a number of individuals who have played a key role in the past year and a brief summary of PROA activities:

 To our donors (PROA does not charge a member fee and is reliant on member donations to execute its functions) the list is long and those of you who have helped, your assistance is appreciated. To name a few; Norman Adami, JJ, John Trollope, the Fick's, Dusty Joubert of Selati, Wicus Diedericks, Angus, Colin, and Piet Warren and so I can continue. But two PROA members deserve a special mention; Thaba Tholo, Rubin Els the owners and managers for their incredible sponsorship and support of PROA over the years. Then to an unsung hero of rhino conservation with a herd of over 1400 animals and having produced over 1000 calves, for not only your support to PROA but for your guts to take DEA to court and for fighting them to the Constitutional Court. John your actions are to the benefit to all of us and we are deeply indebted!!

 The team behind RhinoAlive.com. Dr John Hanks, Tanya Jacobsen, Jane Wiltshire. The same team who also helped throughout CITES and manned the PROA stand.

 To Erika Alberts and the MLP media team for incredible assistance, not only on media coverage on matters 'rhino and PROA' but, their involvement in RhinoAlive, CITES and the publishing of the Rhino Files (you all have received a copy), as well as developing our corporate identity. The meticulous attention to detail of all their work is amazing

 Individuals who through their excellent editorial submissions counter the speculative rubbish published by certain NGO's, Mike t' sas Rolfes and Mike Eustace. Thank you



 The PROA Board for your time and availability to serve the interests of all rhino owners, in particular Izak du Toit for his legal wisdom and time availability to PROA plus his achievements on the John Hume case with DEA.

 The WRSA executive for their support to PROA in particular Peter Oberem

The actions and achievements of PROA are well documented in various articles and the PROA News. PROA is sometimes portrayed in the media as simply a pro trade NGO, but we do much more. Since the establishment of PROA in 2009 (7 years ago), we have helped numerous rhino owners in many ways.

PROA Board members now serve on all the PROVJOINTS as well as on the NATJOC wildlife crimes committees, I served on the Ministerial Committee of Inquiry and presented to the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee. PROA lobby the Minister at every opportunity and are an integrated and respected organization in all relevant state structures. As part of our security actions we published the highly respected Rhino Crime Scene Guide which now forms part of the SAPS Stock Theft Unit training manual. Our input during the Rhino Lab has been incorporated into a number of key actions including the new security strategy and the identification of 44 key outcomes, 10 to be executed this year

We serve on the SADC Rhino Management Group as a member as well as the IUCN AfrSG. We attended CITES in 2013 Bangkok and again in 2016 where we addressed the Member States during the Swaziland Trade Application debate in support of International Trade in rhino horn

Through our efforts millions of rand of positive and credible media coverage has been achieved worldwide and many international friendships established. Both sustainable utilization NGO's and CITES Member States sympathetic and supportive of our needs and plight.

Our security actions have led to the arrest of a number of poachers. Through RAGE funding we have investigated syndicates and provided key intelligence to SAPS and will play a role in forthcoming court cases against the likes of Hugo Ras and others as State Witness

Later this year PROA will again conduct our bi annual owner survey with independent data assessment through the RMG, I assure you of total confidentiality, security and that the



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raw data received will not be shared with any 3rd party. Your assistance in returning the forms will be appreciated, the summary data is required to determine population numbers, opinion trends and poacher impact

Finally and most importantly through our actions we have saved rhino lives and will bring investor confidence back to rhino conservation through Sustainable Utilization and not through AR NGO 'begging bowls' who raise funds on pictures of our dead rhino, are unaccountable where the money goes and attack us on every anti trade forum, with total disregard of our key role in conserving over 33% of the nation's rhino"



Trade

Per the PROA constitution and with 85% support by rhino owners (10% undecided and 5% anti trade per the 2015 PROA/RMG survey) we have lobbied for the right to sell horn both domestically and internationally, to use this revenue to mitigate our rhino security and management costs. Two rhino owners John Hume and Johan Kruger took DEA to court to achieve this right as the Minister has consistently upheld the Moratorium despite our repeated requests for its removal. This matter still sits with the Constitutional Court and we await their ruling

The Minister announced per Gazette Notice 74 of 2017 dated the 8th February; Draft Regulations for the Domestic Trade in Rhinoceros Horn etc. and calling for public comment. PROA has made a submission in support of the Draft Regulations with legal input from Izak du Toit. Thanks to those of you who also submitted per our request to owners. The Department will now have to review all submissions and either proceed or review their Draft but as can be anticipated this will take some time.

In light of the above the PROA Board has proposed the creation of an in-house selling structure (brokerage or CSO). The concept outlining three types of trade was circulated to all members prior to our AGM and adopted by unanimous consent; 'That the PROA Rhino Horn Trade Proposal be approved in principal, and that the Board of the Company be authorized to develop, promote and/or amend same in the furtherance of the Companies objective of sustainable use of rhino horn as a recognized renewable natural resource'

It must be noted that PROA is a non-profit company and accordingly acts on behalf of its members. We are currently drafting a 'Heads of Agreement' to formulate the



relationship between PROA and its members who wish to trade (those reserves who do not wish to are unaffected by this arrangement). We will call for tenders from service providers to provide a centralized storage facility for horn with the necessary stock control, data management and independent audit. This arrangement will allow for both domestic as well as international speculative trade (NB the horn remains within SA and is not in violation of any domestic legislation or CITES trade bans)

Once we have completed the research of the storage and proposed trade structure we will circulate to our members. Please remember irrespective if wishing to trade or not the facilities I describe above are open to all rhino owners



RhinoAlive.com

Please go online and comment or supply content to our pro sustainable utilization social media campaign www.RhinoAlive.com or email Tanya Jacobsen on tangowjuliet@gmail.com. We continue to see highly emotive and grossly inaccurate material published by Animal Rights NGO's and all counter comments based on conservation needs and facts will be appreciated



[Research request Dr Morne' de la Rey](#) (please see assistance request to PROA members as written by Morne')

"There are currently 3 northern white rhino left in the world and they are on Ol Pejeta Conservancy in Kenya. The bull (~45yr) is beyond reproductive soundness, one cow has cystic endometriosis and the other cow has a torn hock ligament and they assume she will not be able to carry the extra weight of a pregnancy. In this light the only option for breeding with their genetics are through ART (assisted reproductive techniques like OPU, ICSI, IVF, Stem cells and subsequent ET into southern white rhino).

June 2015 I started, funding it myself, to do reproductive research and work on rhino. With the help of Dr Hendrik Hansen, we designed a motorised probe holder to move rectally into a rhino and scan 1.2 meters deep in the rhino. I can also manoeuvre it to scan the pregnancies on the floor of the abdomen and ovaries (sometimes they are around the corner of the ilium). In big old cows just the cervixes are so deep that one's hand can barely reach, therefore with this technique I can scan endometrial pathology, otherwise not visible. A lot of this



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I do while other procedures are done to the head and horns of the animal. I have also started to harvest testis, ovaries and oocytes from dead rhino for research purpose, making moulds of the uterus and cervixes etc. All of this, along with help of various colleagues, have given me great insight and ideas for the future of rhino reproduction.

I ask your assistance to please let me know any time (day or night) if you have or know of a dead rhino, male or female. I can still harvest live oocytes from a rhino 6 hrs after her death and live semen from a bull 12 hrs (sometimes 24 hrs) after his death. With this I would like to do research on IVF with the oocytes and various freezing techniques with the semen. Even if an animal is dead longer than this time, I would still like to have the various organs for tests. One of my team at Embryo Plus will either be able to come out and do the tasks themselves or liaise with the relevant vet to do the small procedures on our behalf. It's very easy and simple.

OVARIES:

If you can cut out the ovaries ASAP (having time and approval), please go ahead the following way:

- Cut out ovaries as clean and "sterile" as possible.
- Put in a clean/sterile container like a falcon tube/sterile sample bag and if you have none of that a Ziploc bag is next best.
- Put the samples in a warm container around 35-38°C. If you have a warm cooler bag/polystyrene container is perfect. **DO NOT COOL OVARIES**
- Even if you can get "old" ovaries is fine as we can study anatomy.
- **TESTIS:**
- Cut out the testis as clean and "sterile" as possible
- The testis is internally situated and is reached from behind just under the pelvic bone, positioned horizontally on either side of the penis in the pelvic fold.
- Put the testis in a clean/sterile container like a falcon sterile sample bag and if you have none of that a Ziploc bag is next best.
- Put the samples in a cool container around 5°C. If you have a cooler bag/polystyrene container is perfect. You can put the testis with cold packs, but don't let the testis touch directly the cold packs or ice. That is 0°C

We can the make plans to send my driver or meet somewhere to collect the samples.

Please call me on my no: +27 82 55 31260. If there is no answer, the call will go through to my office. PLEASE leave an urgent message. Also an SMS or



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WhatsApp is wonderful. Any other ideas or requests can be sent to me by e-mail: morne@embryoplus.com.

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PROA funding needs

As mentioned earlier PROA does not charge a member fee and is reliant on donations to cover all operational expenses. The RhinoAlive.com campaign and CITES cost close to R1, 3 million in addition other operational expenses. The actions of the association are of benefit to all rhino owners (members of PROA or not). Accordingly I appeal to members for any financial assistance possible. Invoices are available on request. We are a registered NPC.

Account Name: Private Rhino Owners Association

FNB: Cradle stone Mall code 210636

Acc Number: 62427189651



Kind regards

Pelham Jones



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