

Air patrols for rhinos continue Support from Wilderness Safaris

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Wilderness Safaris Namibia will continue with its air patrols by plane and two helicopters to protect black rhinos in the Northwest.

Wilderness Safaris' partnership with the Save the Rhino Trust Namibia (SRT) and the Ministry of the Environment, Forestry and Tourism's successful anti-poaching operation, which forms part of a campaign launched last year, is a huge success.

The goal of the campaign is to monitor, dehorn and protect black rhinos in the northwest of the country.

With the help of Wilderness Safaris Sustainability Fund, nearly 50 rhinos were dehorned during the recent operation to discourage poachers and veterinary services were also conducted in local settlements.

Dr. Conrad Brain, Wilderness Safaris Namibia's environmental scientist, pilot and veterinarian, says SRT's rhino keepers and trackers are at the heart of the joint achievements achieved to date.

After enduring and treating rhinos during the day at the end of last year, he subsequently visited the rhino ward settlements to treat their dogs, as veterinary services are not available in these isolated areas.

Brain was also able to obtain medicine and vaccine for their dogs through Wilderness Safaris' sustainability fund.

"I enjoyed getting to know the dogs with their names that fit their personalities: Girl, Problem, Lightning, Damarakind, Voetsek, Bill Clinton, President, The Rock, Ford Ranger, Flowerpot and of course, Wagter."

This was just the beginning and they are planning to establish a mobile veterinary clinic in one of the settlements where Brain can operate the animals.

"It was a privilege to help the local communities and to highlight the important link between communities, ecotourism and nature conservation. Their support is essential for the future protection of our wilderness areas and the survival of the rhino," Brain said.

He says the operation's success is part of a unique conservation partnership that spans more than a decade.

"The surveys and patrols gave the conservation team the opportunity to not only carefully monitor and document Namibia's wildlife, but contributed to the huge decline in rhino poaching in the protected areas in recent years," says Brain.

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