



SANParks partners with private sector and takes rhino poaching war to the skies

*Ichikowitz Family Foundation bolsters SANParks'
surveillance capability to save the rhino*

Kruger National Park, 4 December 2012: Efforts to combat rhino poaching in the Kruger National Park were bolstered this morning as the Ichikowitz Family Foundation and South African National Parks (SANParks) launched a new, state-of-the-art aerial surveillance solution to save South Africa's rhinos.



The unique specialist reconnaissance aircraft, The Seeker Seabird, incorporating highly sophisticated surveillance technology, was unveiled this morning at Skukuza airport, in the Kruger National Park (KNP). The unveiling was part of an announcement of a strategic cooperation between the Ichikowitz Family Foundation and SANParks which will see the Foundation providing SANParks with a number of solutions from the Paramount Group, an associated entity.

Speaking at the unveiling, Dr David Mabunda, CEO of SANParks said, "We anticipate that by the end of this calendar year we will have lost about 650 rhinos throughout South Africa, 400 in the Kruger National Park. To date 588 rhinos have been lost to poaching, 364 in the KNP alone. South Africa is home to more than 73% of the world's rhinos, while the KNP is home to about 60% of South Africa's rhinos it accounts for 40% of the world's rhino population. While the combination of criminally slaughtered rhinos and natural mortalities has not reached a point of negative growth we are seeing definite signs of a decrease in



growth numbers.”

“Enough is enough; the mindless slaughter of rhinos in the wild has called for a multi-pronged strategy. We are actively enlisting and broadening our engagement with the private sector to protect and conserve wildlife. We will find the right solutions and fight this war. The strategy is to reach out to a new set of stakeholders that would complement and fundamentally strengthen and provide the necessary intelligence to our existing efforts. We are very happy to announce that the Ichikowitz Family Foundation is contributing to conservation in the Kruger National Park for the benefit of the country’s heritage.”

Speaking at the same event, Ivor Ichikowitz, Chairman of the Ichikowitz Family Foundation and executive chairman of Africa’s largest privately held defence and aerospace company, Paramount Group said “Our world-class electronic systems technology brings expert navigation and surveillance solutions to the fore to help in the search for suspected rhino poachers throughout the Kruger National Park.”

“Advanced visual reconnaissance and surveillance will provide game reserve rangers with robust intelligence in their tireless mission to confront poachers.”

“We will equip the Seeker Seabird with a FLIR Ball infrared detector. This thermal imaging technology will deliver more enhanced and powerful observation capability to the Kruger National Park’s rangers making it very difficult for poachers to hide. The plane demonstrates high degree of flexibility in terms of utilisation, use of operation and reliability. It is capable of flying at high altitude and at slow speeds with 270 degrees visibility. It can be forward positioned on short dirt strips and requires very limited logistical support,” adds Mr Ichikowitz.

“Attitudes about the importance of wildlife in South Africa are changing. The grim realities of environmental crimes committed against wildlife and rhino’s in particular are being recognised with calls for tougher law enforcement and penalties. Initiatives like these are critical to motivate potential consumers to quell demand for wildlife-based products by appealing to their pro-environment instincts.”

“Not only is the Kruger National Park home to the largest population of



rhinos in the world, this National Park also remains the hardest hit by poaching with the park having lost 760 rhinos out of the 1369 grand total that have been killed in South Africa since January 2010,” said Dr Mabunda. “We’re honoured to join forces with the Ichikowitz Family Foundation because this surveillance solution gives our rangers just the right kind of support they need to win the war and it brings us one step closer to ending the devastation of our rhinos.”

Dr Mabunda added that while arrests of poachers were certainly on the increase, the country still had a long way to go before rhino poachers would be eradicated entirely. By 27 November this year a total of 246 arrests had been made during 2012 with more than 640 arrests made since January 2010.

Earlier this month Magistrate Prince Manyathi handed out a stiff 40-year sentence to self-confessed rhino trader and smuggler, Thai national Chumlong Lemtongthai in the Kempton Park Magistrate Court. Dr Mabunda congratulated the SA Justice system for the tough stance it had taken against poachers of South Africa’s heritage, adding that he hoped it acted as a serious deterrent to future perpetrators killing rhinos for their horns.

“SANParks is entrusted to protect our natural heritage. They are at the forefront of saving the rhino,” said Ivor Ichikowitz. “Paramount Group is in the business of developing state of the art defence technology, technology which, through the Family Foundation, we intend placing in SANParks hands in the fight against poachers.”

The Seeker Seabird provides maximum surveillance optimisation and revolutionary reconnaissance capabilities with leading-edge patrol technology that will easily expose illegal poachers that have - to date - been well concealed in their hiding places across the reserve.

“The days of talking about this problem are over – practical solutions such as this aircraft and its surveillance capabilities is the only way to make a real difference,” Mr Ichikowitz added. “It’s time to take dramatic steps to rid this country of poachers and to save our rhinos!”

The South African government is determined to win the war against rhino poaching and calls on all South Africans to do their part to assist.



SANParks and the South African conservation fraternity continues to request the support and cooperation of all members of society in identifying and reporting suspicious behaviour that could lead to the apprehension and conviction of these criminals.

Any incidents of rhino poaching or tip-offs that can prevent illegal killings, or lead to arrests can be reported to 0800 205 005.

(End Of Press Release)



About SANParks

South African National Parks, (SANParks), **manages a system of parks** which represents the indigenous fauna, flora, landscapes and associated cultural heritage of the country. Of all the national parks, most have overnight tourist facilities, with an unrivalled variety of accommodation in arid, coastal, mountain and bushveld habitats.

National parks offer visitors an unparalleled diversity of adventure tourism opportunities including game viewing, bush walks, canoeing and exposure to cultural and historical experiences. Conferences can also be organised in many of the parks.

The national parks are: Groenkloof, Kruger, Table Mountain, Marakele, Golden Gate, Camdeboo, Mountain Zebra, Addo Elephant, Garden Route National Park (Tsitsikamma, Knysna, & Wilderness), Bontebok, Agulhas, West Coast, Karoo, Namaqua, Ai-Ais/Richtersveld, Augrabies, Kgalagadi, Mapungubwe, Tankwa Karoo and Mokala.

For more information please visit us at www.sanparks.co.za



About Ichikowitz Family Foundation

Political, economic and social change is sweeping across Africa. Never has there been so much optimism about the potential of the Continent and the future of its people.

Ichikowitz Family Foundation is founded upon the belief that this potential can be unlocked through education, the respect for human rights, a better understanding of Africa's dynamic history and the conservation of its rich biodiversity.

Nurturing this spirit in Africa's young people is the Foundation's objective in contributing to the Continent's future.

This means driving and supporting educational and developmental programmes that empower the next generation to seize the new century's opportunities. In terms of environmental programmes, the Ichikowitz Family Foundation works to promote personal, communal, and corporate best practice in matters affecting the environment, including the sustainable utilisation of natural resources, supporting research and development of alternative sources of energy, protection and development of water supply and conservation of Africa's unique biodiversity.

Ichikowitz Family Foundation initiates, funds and runs its own projects.

Please visit www.ichikowitzfoundation.com for further information.



About Paramount Group

Paramount Group is Africa's largest privately-owned defence and aerospace business. It is a leader in defence and security innovation and is a trusted partner to sovereign governments around the world, providing ground-breaking products, services and consultancy, including support for peace-keeping missions, humanitarian relief operations and environmental protection.

Please visit www.paramountgroup.biz for more information.



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