

Is Extinction forever?

Well not in Botswana. This country with a big heart and large wildlife area covering 27% of the countryside, lost its rhinos, every last one of them to poaching in the 1980's. Parks officials rallied and introduced white rhino back into the wild.

A Wildlife Films Botswana Production

Produced by Dereck and Beverly Joubert

# Rhino Rescue

In the 1990's they went extinct in Botswana for a second time. This is how it happened.

"In May 1991 we were driving up the border of a national park miles away from anyone and heard gunshots. I went in and tracked for signs of what was happening, giving Beverly instructions to wait 30 minutes and if I did not come back to drive the 3 hours to Savute for help. I found nothing, and returned but something bothered us, and I flew back and searched from the air... and found a black rhino shot dead, still bleeding and with its horn removed, poached. It was a pivotal event because this was the last black rhino in Botswana, and in fact we didn't even know it existed. I called General Ian Khama, then head of the army and asked for help. He gave us 30 men and we searched together, and found that in fact poachers had been very active and had also shot 20 elephants. Over the next few months, he increased the patrols to 800 men and systematically wiped out poaching"

That took us up to the end of the century.

In a fantastic association driven by Wilderness Safari's a commercial safari group, the government department of wildlife and a handful of private people, it was decided that the region was safe once again to attempt another re-introduction of rhinos.

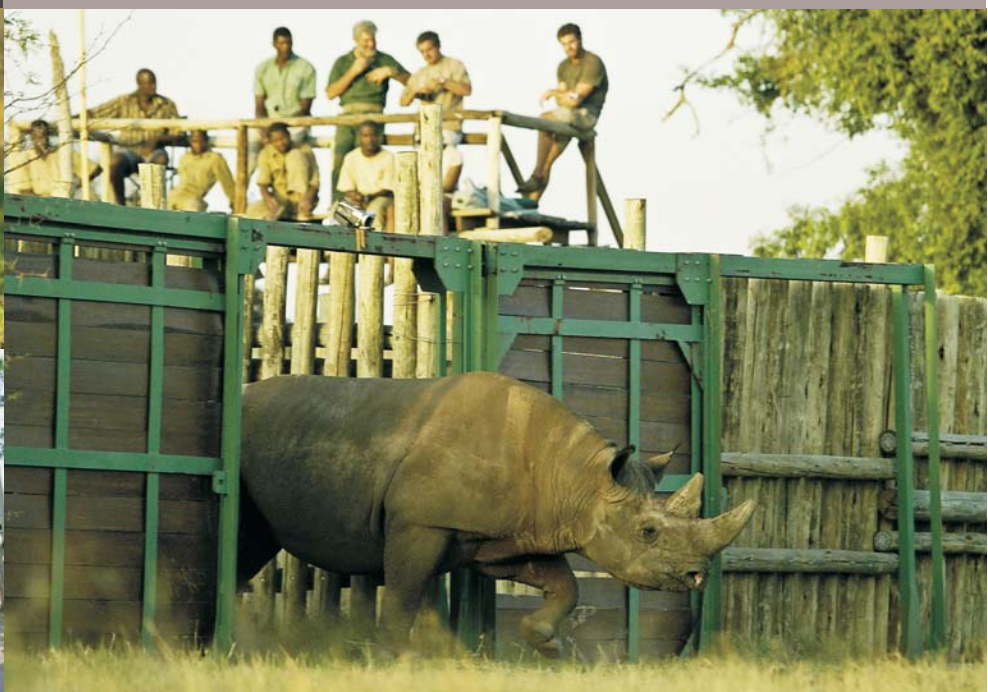
It was a huge risk. Not only would a failed attempt close this effort down forever, but it also raised the question of increasing poaching once again. Transporting rhinos to the middle of the bush is a massive task. Enter the Botswana air force!

Suddenly this effort was upgraded and rhino were being flown around the subcontinent in military transporter planes with military guards. But this is really the story of two characters, one rhino, born free and wild, the first in twenty years, and the man who walks with them each day. Mpho (which means Gift) has a unique relationship with the rhinos.

It is also a testament to a man who once headed up the army's efforts at Anti poaching then as vice president when the first rhino's were released and today as the President of Botswana, that under his watch, rhinos have been rescued from extinction.

Mpho everyday tracks and finds rhino. One night he had a dream, a haunting dream about a rhino baby just born, an impossible dream because it was just months after rhinos were flown up and released. The next day he went out and saw the tiny tracks and he wept. A rhino had been born, and she had been transported in the womb survived the journey, one that is arduous enough for an adult.

The film is shot in places like Top Gun with low angles and action sequences. At other times it is a personal story of a man who is determined to see rhinos running free in his country again, and steeped in African mythology about how we, like the ancients have a connection to these animals.



[www.hellion.co.nz](http://www.hellion.co.nz) [www.wildlifeconservationfilms.com](http://www.wildlifeconservationfilms.com)

Hellion

Hellion Ltd. PO Box 21, Mapua 7048. Nelson, New Zealand. T +64 3 540 3790. F +64 3 540 3792. M +64 219 10009. [helen@hellion.co.nz](mailto:helen@hellion.co.nz)