The George Adamson Wildlife Preservation Trust

Report For The Suzuki Rhino Club

The Mkomazi Project

September 2013 to April 2014



JCB putting a rhino crate onto the TANAPA lorry. We loaned the crate to TANAPA for use in the Serengeti National Park. Suzuki quad bike and modified trailer in the foreground carrying fence posts



Zawadi takes a carrot



Rhino Sanctuary fence repair and replacement



Rhino bulls – James and Jonah - fighting



Fundraising dinner for the vocational training centre at the Louwman Museum

Our trip to The Netherlands for the Suzuki Rhino Club fundraising dinner in February was fantastic and will be a wonderful memory for years to come. It was heartening to see all the Suzuki Rhino Club Ambassadors gathered together in the Louwman Museum to support the rhinos, wild dogs and the fundraising initiative for the Vocational Training Centre (VTC). Tony was really pleased to be able to update everyone on the progress that has been made in Mkomazi over the past year on all fronts. Our thanks to Ted van Dam for his opening speech and to you all for making us feel so welcome.

It is thanks to the support of the Suzuki Rhino Club that we have been able to manage The Mkomazi Project at such a professional level and to make such progress with species that are on the brink of extinction. We are here for the long-haul to help re-establish these species back into the wild. We are sometimes asked how much longer we intend to continue. The simple answer is that if we are ultimately going to make a difference to these endangered species in these highly pressurized times, these programmes have to continue forever. For endangered species, there are no new beginnings, only an empty end.



New banner for the Gonja Mheza Rhino VTC

Mkomazi Rhino Sanctuary

We are up against highly-sophisticated and heavily armed poaching gangs, with established criminal syndicates reaping the rewards of this slaughter. A few individuals within the region benefit financially from this poaching, but these nations are becoming increasingly impoverished as their key wildlife species and therefore their tourism (one of their biggest foreign exchange earners) continues to be destroyed. People and wildlife are being killed to supply living-room clutter, status symbols and non-existent medical 'remedies'.

In the field, we have to react to this ongoing slaughter and continuously increase and adapt the security measures in place and uphold the integrity of the personnel and the fence. Fence repair and replacement goes on continuously. Apart from the extra security of the fortified fence line, by moving fence gangs from one side of the Sanctuary to the other and from one end of the Sanctuary to the other every three or four days, we also have the benefit of the added security of their presence and continuous movement around the place. Of course, the new Suzuki quad bike and adapted trailer have enabled us to carry out this work so efficiently and we are very grateful to the Suzuki Rhino Club for these fantastic donations.

The plant machinery works continuously in the Sanctuary to keep the roads, tracks, fence line, water pans and all other systems in good shape. The JCB is currently following the entire 40 km sanctuary line putting in massive drainage ditches prior to the grader attending to the whole line both inside and out when we have had the first few showers of rain. This is a huge task but if it is done properly, it should last for a good few years.

We are now installing four more heavy-duty internal gates between all the separated areas within the Sanctuary. These gates are being constructed for access to the internal



Deborah, Jamie and their calf Hilla at the water pan. These rhinos were translocated to Mkomazi Rhino Sanctuary from the Dvur Kralove Zoo, Czech Republic by Suzuki Rhino Club.



Solar power upgrade at Rhino Sanctuary security outpost

sections; for movement of rhinos into areas of better vegetation when necessary; movement of the water bowser and tractor and other plant machinery between sections; and to move the translocated rhinos onwards into larger areas, thereby making way for new rhinos coming in.

Solar power systems have been upgraded in the main security outposts, giving good power to the fence lines at all times, as well as charging radio batteries and providing lighting at the outpost. We need to continue to develop the dedicated water storage and piping systems for each water hole. With the recent 'moves' of the male rhinos undertaken, we are building more water pans and storage systems in the new extension area to where they have been moved. One more internal security outpost has been constructed and three more are planned in strategic areas for mid 2014.



Digital radio equipment arrives in Mkomazi

Late last year, we received a donation for a new digital radio system for the Sanctuary. This system provides a much higher level of security to improve the management of the Sanctuary with enhanced communications and GPS tracking of personnel on daily duties. This increases the capacity of the staff and managers to react to any poaching threats or incidents. In order to install it, we had to upgrade the entire solar power system in both the base-camp and in the Sanctuary security outposts. We did this with the support of Suzuki Rhino Club who provided the new solar batteries. Simply adding on a mixture of various panels and batteries to the existing system would not have provided a reliable long-term power supply and would have been a false economy. Everything had to be of high quality, matched together and properly integrated. We were fortunate to receive advice from solar technicians from both Switzerland and the USA. By upgrading this solar power, we have improved the integrity of the whole operation, so it has been a great step forwards. Thank you, Suzuki Rhino Club, for the part you played in this.



Installing the digital radio repeater at the top of Hafino Hill

We also had to make, on site, a huge repeater housing-box for the new digital radio repeater, which was placed on top of the 4,000 ft mountain in the Sanctuary. A

road had to be re-made all the way up to the top of the mountain to allow for access. A 'tech' room was built at the base-camp for this new system. With the benefit of a modem and a computer with a large screen, we can see at any time where personnel and vehicles are. This makes the checks and balances at times much easier as the distances involved are so huge. This has been a huge boost to all the personnel and came at a time when we really needed to have a lot more information at our fingertips a lot quicker, because of the increased sophistication of the rhino poachers.



Rhino Sanctuary personnel working at the holding compounds. Suzuki quad bike ready for action!

We are now looking at CCTV systems, which are becoming a lot more affordable, to cover most of the fence line using a signal sent from a microwave system on top of a mountain back to base-camp. However, as informative as this new technology is, there is no substitute for boots on the ground.



Pete Morkel working on the horn of Jonah who had been fighting with James. Horn being taken down to stop a potentially fatal fight.

Semu Pallangyo is on his Suzuki 4000Z bike for much of the day, moving around the Sanctuary checking on all the systems and all the personnel. It has been a fantastic addition to the daily operations and to the efficiency of his working life and daily operations.

Dr Pete Morkel spent a couple of weeks in Mkomazi and after a lot of thought and discussion, laid out a long term breeding plan for the entire Sanctuary. Within the majority of the Sanctuary there is an already established hierarchy of rhinos in a large fenced area and it is incumbent upon us to ensure we don't upset this. New rhinos coming in from the outside go through a series of paddocks on the periphery to initially both avoid confrontation and to be in the area where there are heavily maintained tsetse-targets. It is essential to keep this system ready for any incoming rhino.

Pete moved Jabu and Monduli to the extension area where they are now well used to each other. We will need to construct an internal fence in this extension area so we can separate out these males and give them a female each. The extension area is huge and could (possibly) hold at least seven rhino. Pete also fitted GPS satellite foot collars onto Jonah and James and tipped their horns, as they had been engaging in pretty

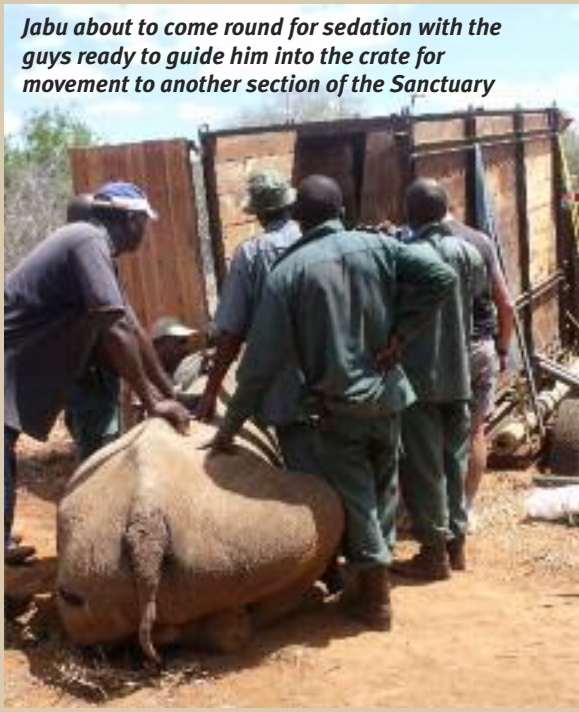
Pete Morkel preparing the immobilisation darts. Semu Pallangyo watching on





Rhino Sanctuary fence repair

brutal fights. Although the fighting is normal and actually essential, the tipped horns will hopefully prevent any fatal exchanges. The foot collars gave live-feed to a satellite that we were able to access to determine their positions six times a day, they also caused awful skin damage, picked up in record time by our trackers. Dr Idrissa Chuma, Dr Maacha and Emmanuel Sisya came in to remove them. We are now looking to see if we can improve the power and capability of the rhino horn transmitters using VHF signals.



Jabu about to come round for sedation with the guys ready to guide him into the crate for movement to another section of the Sanctuary

We decided that the two females from Port Lympne (Zawadi and Grumeti) should be put together with the Dvur Kralove rhinos (Jamie and Deborah and their calf Hilla) and this is something that we will work on over the next few months. Jamie is a proven breeding bull and one bull with three adult females is a good combination. Firstly, Zawadi and Grumeti will have to go through a transition area, which joins up (through a fence) with Jamie and Deborah's area, so that they can initially get used to each other through the fence. However, this transition area needs to be well-guarded and we will construct and man a security outpost there before opening it up for the rhinos to move through.

Shortly before going to print, the first rhino born in Mkomazi (and named by the Suzuki Rhino Club) Suzi, has just given birth to her own calf. We are keeping this fairly quiet for now, as the calf is still only a few weeks old and vulnerable to predation from hyenas and leopards.

24 hours a day, 7 days a week, everybody is on the job looking after these rhinos as the street value of horn rises higher than the price of gold. We are enormously grateful to Suzuki Rhino Club for all your support.



Penieli Mbise and Zawadi

African Wild Dog Breeding, Veterinary and Reintroduction Programme

We have carried out three reintroductions of wild dogs on the Mkomazi/Tsavo border. Ted and Catrien van Dam were able to join us for one of these reintroductions, which we were really pleased about. Sedating and moving the wild dogs to the reintroduction compound is always stressful and tense for us, but the most important thing is limiting the stress that the dogs themselves feel. We feel we have managed to find a good system for this and although they have to be held in the reintroduction compounds for at least two weeks, their long-term freedom is obviously what this programme is all about.



Tony, Catrien and Ted van Dam during a wild dog translocation

Thanks to TANAPA's management, there is a lot of standing water in Mkomazi, no domestic stock and abundant prey species, so conditions are good.

When the dogs are reintroduced, the keepers are based with them at the reintroduction compounds on the Mkomazi / Tsavo border. After release, they will continue to be fed and given water if they need it. Each pack is different and our philosophy is that these reintroductions cannot be done as on 'open the box and let them go' basis. Some of the released packs need post-release care until they become self-sufficient. Other packs are self-sufficient from day one.

All the reintroductions went well. One pack of seven sisters was seen hunting on day two of release. The other pack of four brothers and four sisters (unrelated to each other) was also a success, even though the males and females immediately split away from each other and went off in single-sex groups. This is quite normal with wild dogs. Our keepers follow them up with the receivers and antennas, both on foot (often



Sedated dogs at the reintroduction compound on the Tsavo / Mkomazi border just before the reversal drug is administered

walking to the tops of mountains) and in vehicles and they The males were seen by TANAPA rangers a few weeks later looking in very good shape. The females have been seen regularly.

We have started to establish two new breeding packs in the compounds at the base camp, as two of our alpha females are coming to the end of their breeding lives. We would love to release these old retired breeding pairs back to the wild, but it is not possible as even though they might remain close to our camp they would be extremely vulnerable to predation.

Three of our alpha females in the breeding compounds have just given birth so at the time of going to print, we have three new litters of pups.

Recent discussions with Dr Emmanuel Masenga and Dr Robert Fyumagwa of the Tanzanian Wildlife Research Institute (TAWIRI) on their project to reintroduce wild dogs to the Serengeti National Park have been very positive. Dr Massenga has already established two packs of wild dogs on the Serengeti, which have bred and are hunting successfully. We have shared our experiences with TAWIRI and TANAPA for the betterment of their project and we are keen to help their efforts.

Our sincerest thanks to the Suzuki Rhino Club for helping support the day to day costs of this important endangered species programme.



Alpha female at feed time!
Alpha male to the left



Semu Pallangyo and Alex Fitzjohn looking at the new Suzuki motorbike!



Facial injuries sustained by James after fighting with Jonah



Tissue damage from the GPS foot collars. Collars removed in record time



Ambassador Ombeni Sefue, Chief Secretary to HE The President of Tanzania, with the Tanzanian trust Chairman, Bernard Mchomvu at Kisima camp



Suzuki quad bike and modified trailer ready for work



New security outpost



Tony with Dr Emmanuel Maacha, Emmanuel Sisya and Dr Idrissa Chuma of TANAPA

Mkomazi outreach programme





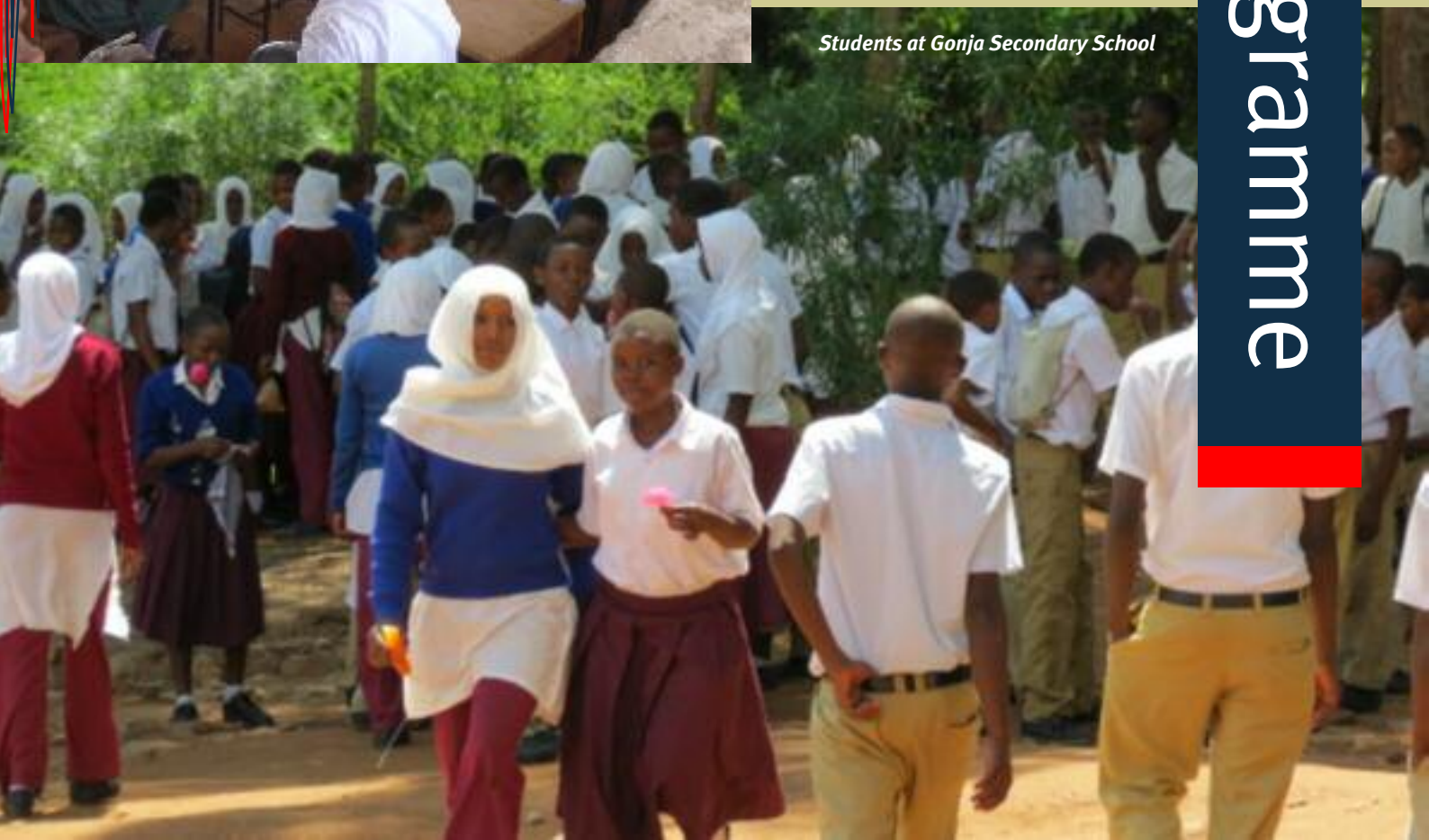
Gonja Secondary School – construction completed on new science laboratories and administrative offices

Since the start of our Mkomazi Outreach Programme in 1993, we have helped 35 schools with new classrooms, dormitories and science laboratories.

We have also built a complete secondary school in our local village of Kisiwani. Our track record is impeccable in this regard and for a small wildlife organization we are very proud of the educational assistance that we have given to the local communities living around Mkomazi National Park. The environmental education programme is terrific. The custom-made, brightly painted, wildlife-themed bus brings in 1000 school kids, teachers, community leaders and wildlife college students per year to our camp and to the little classroom in the Rhino Sanctuary for a tightly structured educational day. TANAPA greet them all at the entrance gate to the Park, thereby underlining the close partnership that exists between us. Our assistance to the local communities has not just been limited to education. We have also helped on polio campaigns, construction of a medical dispensary, de-silting of dams in rural areas for domestic stock and the provision of water pumps in local villages.



Students at Ndungu Secondary School



Students at Gonja Secondary School

Vocational Training Centre (VTC)



Suzuki Rhino Club Ambassadors at the Louwman Museum listening to the introduction by Ted van Dam and the presentation given by Tony

Tony has always wanted to help the youth of the area learn to work with their hands. This could only have been done on a large scale to make it successful.

The Suzuki Rhino Club commissioned the feasibility study on the VTC carried out by Evans Kirigia and what started off as a commitment by SSRC for the construction and equipping of a dedicated mechanics training classroom developed into a big project for a well-designed, well-constructed and fully equipped VTC. The natural progression of this was to form a partnership and we are very grateful to have found the right partners in the field to make this a reality. Noud van Hout of the Watoto Foundation has put in place the template for a well-run vocational training centre with his excellent centre in Makumira on the outskirts of Arusha. Through Noud, we met the Roman Catholic Bishop of Same, Rogarth Kimaryo, who will run the VTC through the Diocese of Same.





Foundations laid at the vocational training centre

The Suzuki Rhino Club fundraising dinner for the VTC at the Louwman Museum was a remarkable event, both in terms of what was raised - which was beyond all our expectations - and also with the great atmosphere which characterised the evening. It was wonderful to see all the Suzuki Rhino Club ambassadors together and we are very proud of our long-term friendship and association with you all.

During the course of the dinner, the following fantastic donations were received:-

On behalf of the Suzuki Rhino Club, the Chairman Ted van Dam donated 50,000 euros.

On behalf of the Watoto Foundation, Noud van Hout donated 50,000 euros.

On behalf of Wilde Ganzen, the director Klaas van Mill donated 50,000 euros.

Tony Fitzjohn advised the audience that John and Marine Fentener van Vlissingen and BCD had donated 50,000 dollars.

All the other attendees of the dinner donated over 40,000 euros.

On behalf of Schlumberger BV, the director Bram Verburg will donate 5,000 euros on an annual basis.



At the Suzuki Rhino Club fundraising dinner for the vocational training centre. From the left: Tony, Ted van Dam of the Suzuki Rhino Club, Noud van Hout of the Watoto Foundation and Klaas van Mill of Wilde Ganzen

During this fundraising, a polystyrene school-room representing the VTC was slowly constructed in the museum and at the end of the evening, a roof was placed on top of the VTC.

After the incredible success of the fundraising dinner, work has started on the VTC. Noud van Hout is regularly at the construction site in Gonja holding meetings with the Diocese of Same, the District authorities and the building contractor. Tony and Elisaria meet him there when possible and the next site meeting is mid April.

The heavy rains have caused difficulties with some of the early stages of the construction work. The boys from the Watoto Foundation have been working hard on the construction site. The school office should be ready by the end of April, at which point it can be used for the manager and for weekly meetings. Hopefully if the supply of building stones continues, the foundations of all the VTC buildings will be ready within the next month or so.

Anne Malecela Kilango, the MP for Same East, kindly set up a meeting with Tony, Noud, Elisaria and the Prime Minister of Tanzania, The Right Hon. Mizengo Pinda. This meeting took place in Dodoma, the seat of the Tanzanian Parliament. The District Commissioner for Same, Herman Kapufi, had also travelled to Dodoma to attend this meeting. The issue of exemption of taxes for the VTC was discussed at length and the Prime Minister gave both excellent advice and the process through which this could be best achieved. He also expressed an interest in travelling to Mkomazi to see the rhino and wild dog projects and to possibly lay the foundation stone for the VTC.



Ongoing construction at the vocational training centre with administration offices going up



Works starts on the vocational training centre



Meeting in Gonja village with Tony, the Watoto Foundation, the MP for Same, Anne Kilango Malecela and the District Commissioner, Herman Kapufi.



After the meeting on the vocational training centre at the Bishop of Same's office

Although we are all very realistic about the challenges that lie ahead, the team has many years of practical experience between them all and we are all really looking forward to the next stage.

We are all really pleased that we can play a large part in this initiative to provide youngsters with practical training that will move them into the job market, rather than heading unskilled to the towns, being disappointed or overwhelmed and then drifting back to the villages again.

We are a wildlife organization and all of this outreach work has been made possible essentially because of the Mkomazi Rhino Sanctuary. The Rhino Sanctuary, along with the wild dog programme and the huge infrastructure that the Trust has put in place over all these years, stimulated TANAPA's interest into upgrading this game reserve into a National Park. It was the local people of Gonja who wanted to name the VTC the 'Gonja Mheza Rhino VTC', as they themselves realize it is the attention paid here to this highly endangered and dwindling black rhino species that has made all of this possible. Everyone needs something to hang their hat on, and we are really glad that the local communities have 'hung their hat' on the rhinos.



Gonja village



Anne Kilango Malecela and Noud van Hout

Orphaned Elephant Calf

Our baby elephant is now over 2 years old. He is browsing well for at least 18 hours a day and firmly attached to his two keepers,

Thomas and Zacharia. He has now moved out of his small stable and into the large elephant compound, originally built for the reintroduction into the wild of Nina, a 27 year old female elephant that had been raised in an Arusha zoo. He is closed up into the compound in the dead of night with an enormous amount of vegetation ready and waiting for him to consume. He is still milk dependent and currently gets through 16 litres of milk a day. It will take many years for him to move away from this camp to start a life in the wild as a young bull elephant. It is a complicated, long and intense process and his peace of mind is at the forefront of everyone's daily routine here, as we just have to try our best to mimic certain aspects of his natural upbringing.



2 years old and tusks coming through



First aid session

Aircraft 5H DOG



New engine in 5H DOG

The aircraft is still in Nairobi and has been there since September 2013 getting a mandatory engine replacement fitted.

A factory over-hauled engine was sourced and shipped from a highly reputable company in the USA. It is a slightly bigger engine than the existing one. A massive amount of work has been done on the aircraft whilst it has been in the maintenance facility and this is an enormous relief. It has been stripped down to its frame, an enormous amount of wiring removed and modified, and new radios have been fitted. The aircraft had a lot of corrosion which has all been treated and the windscreen apparently had no retaining bracket, which has just been hand-made in the USA and which held up the process of fitting in the new engine for so many months. But having an aircraft in one of the best maintenance facilities in Nairobi for this amount of time has given them a fantastic opportunity to go through everything with a fine-tooth comb and this is a great relief after 20 years of in-house maintenance in Mkomazi and Arusha. This is the longest that Tony has been out of the air and both TANAPA and he are awaiting the day that the aircraft arrives back on the Kisima airstrip.

General



Zawadi feeding

Tony travelled to Holland in November 2013 for a very good meeting with the Suzuki Rhino Club board.

It was a pleasure to be able to welcome the SSRC Ambassadors who travelled to Mkomazi last September and we look forward to welcoming the next group of Ambassadors who are due to come to Mkomazi in early October this year. We were also very pleased to welcome Ted and Catrien van Dam to Mkomazi and to show them the progress that has been made in the field.

Our sincerest thanks to the Board of the Suzuki Rhino Club; Ted van Dam, Marten Loedeman, Dik Dekker, Martin de Wilt and Bobberd van der Linden, and the colleagues at BV Nimag, for all the support over these months and for putting on the fundraising event at the Louwman Museum.

Thank you to Ted and Catrien van Dam for hosting us in The Netherlands. Many thanks to Rineke van Dam for putting so much time, hard work and effort into the successful fundraising proposal for the VTC.

Our thanks to Morad Belhaj who is always at the end of the phone or an email to help with the more complicated maintenance problems with the Grand Vitaras. We really do appreciate his considered advice and support.

Once again, we are indebted to you, the Suzuki Rhino Club, for the tremendous support that you have given over the past six months for these projects. We do hope that you enjoy this report.



Suzuki quad bike and trailer in the workshop



Elephant herd at Kisima camp

We know we always say this, but we are losing the natural world and we must fight – and pay – to save it. We are trying as hard as we can but we cannot do this without your help.



View over Mkomazi National Park towards Kilimanjaro