

RAY DEARLOVE

*The*  
**CRASH**  
*of*  
**RHINOS**

Preventing the Extinction of an Iconic Species



*The*  
CRASH  
*of*  
RHINOS

RAY DEARLOVE

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## FOREWORD

With my African heritage, I am deeply concerned about the threats to endangered species by poachers. As an example, on average, three rhinos are killed every day for their horns which are believed by some people to have mystical powers to cure anything



from the common cold to cancer. The reality is that rhino horn is made of keratin, a protein found in human hair and fingernails.

I cannot conceive of a world without rhinos and a few years ago, Ray kindly invited me to sit on a panel discussing the rhino crisis at the launch of The Australian Rhino Project. Sadly, since that date, more than 6000 rhinos have been slaughtered for their horns. I am very happy to support any efforts to save rhinos from extinction in the wild. I have observed Ray working tirelessly to play his part and *The Crash of Rhinos* is a bittersweet account of his journey. As in my sport, situations such as this require tenacity and resilience and Ray's innovative approach provides hope for the remaining rhinos on our planet.

George Gregan AM

Former captain of the Australian Wallabies

I have known Ray for several years and have watched with interest his tireless work to help prevent the extinction of rhinos in the wild.

Rhinos face so many challenges including loss of habitat, human encroachment into their lands and the might of the inter-

national crime syndicates who create havoc with poaching for their horns. People like Ray Dearlove with their passion and resilience are making a difference and their work is so important.

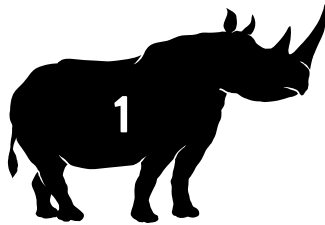
*The Crash of Rhinos* shows us just how much one person can achieve. I hope that it inspires and encourages you to take action to help the world's remaining rhinos.

Jane Goodall, PhD, DBE

Founder, the Jane Goodall Institute & United Nations Messenger of Peace







## **“YOU CAN SEE RHINOS AROUND EVERY CORNER”**

I had requested a meeting with the South African Minister for the Environment, Edna Molewa, in late 2014 to brief her about my plan to relocate rhinos from South Africa to Australia and establish a breeding herd as an insurance policy in the event of extinction in the wild, a project I had named The Australian Rhino Project (TARP). The meeting was facilitated by the Australian Minister for the Environment, Greg Hunt, who had proven to be a strong supporter of the project.

The meeting had an interesting start. I was waiting outside the Sydney Olympic Park boardroom when the door opened and Wendy Black, Greg Hunt’s Chief of Staff, saw me and gave me a wink. Shortly before 10am, Minister Molewa and her large

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entourage walked up the stairs to the boardroom. I stood up to introduce myself and at the same time, the boardroom door opened and there was Minister Hunt. He saw me, came over and said, *“Ah Ray, good to see you. By chance I’ve just met with the head of the WWF, Carter Roberts, and I was telling him about your wonderful project.”*

Minister Molewa was standing by quietly and I asked her if she had met Minister Hunt, she said she hadn’t, so I said to Greg, *“I’d like to introduce you to Minister Molewa.”* Both seemed pleased with the introduction. I felt like Henry Kissinger.

Minister Molewa had responsibility for the wellbeing of rhinos and other endangered species and it was critical that she had a clear understanding of what I was trying to achieve. I hoped to gain her support for the plan. Her first question was not an unreasonable one: Why did I think that Australia was safe from rhino poachers? My answers had been well researched and practiced and I explained that, as an island, Australia has robust border controls; there is little comparable poverty or corruption in Australia; there is no history of poaching in the country and, because of the size of Australia, there is no community pressure on wildlife areas. Furthermore, if there were to be just one poaching incident, there would be an uproar – led by the media. The Australian media is not to be meddled with.

I was stunned when Minister Molewa responded, *“But Ray, you can see rhinos around every corner in the Kruger Park.”*

Then, and still today, South Africa was losing three rhinos a day to poaching, mainly in the Kruger National Park. A total of 1004 rhinos had been slaughtered the year before and the monthly kill rate had jumped to over 100 in 2014. Could the minister be

serious? With a value of approximately US\$23 billion per annum, illegal wildlife trafficking is the fourth most lucrative global crime after drugs, humans and weaponry. The international crime syndicates, mostly Asia-based, considered rhino poaching low-risk but with extraordinarily high returns.

I was the sole representative of TARP at the meeting while the minister brought along eleven members of her support staff. There was not enough room at the boardroom table so some had to find seats along the wall.

As the minister dropped this bombshell, I glanced at the others for any reaction to her provocative statement. There was none – everyone had their eyes down gazing intently at their notes. My mind was racing, the retort was so unexpected. Was she trying to be amusing and this was just a throwaway line? I didn't think so. Was she trivialising the issue? Perhaps. Was she in denial? Perhaps. Or was she asserting that she was in complete control of the situation and the global focus on rhino poaching in South Africa was unreasonable, misinformed and unwelcome, and the last thing that she needed was help from outside, particularly from Australia? I felt it was a reckless and unnecessary comment and it troubled me.

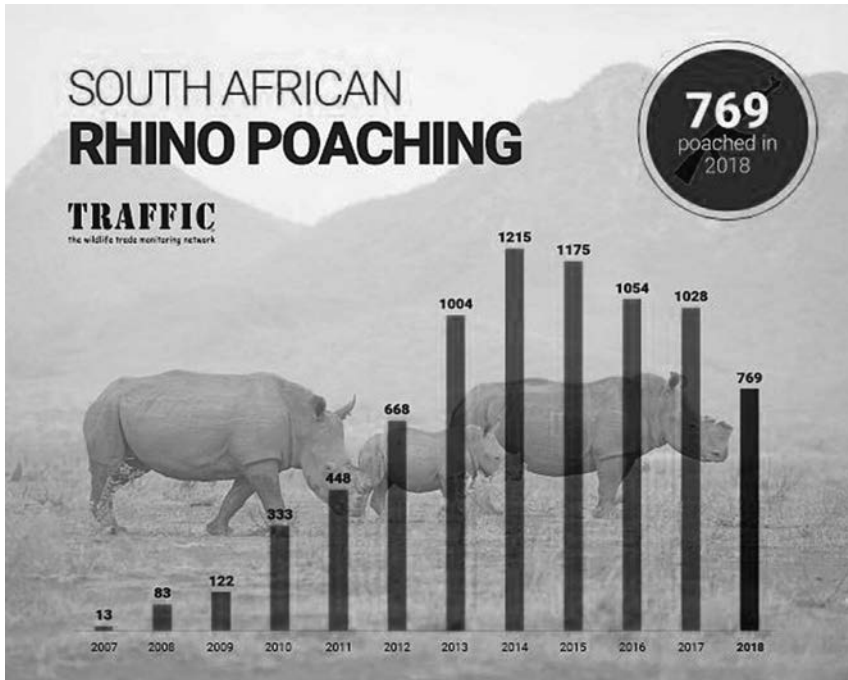
Having lectured me for the first twenty-five minutes of the meeting, the minister finally heard me out but made



The author with the late Edna Molewa, South African Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs

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it clear that, while my plan certainly had merit, there was a comprehensive strategy in play in South Africa to counter the poaching crisis and that all of these strategies needed to be tested before considering any offshore or ex-situ solution such as TARP.



Source: South African Department of Environmental Affairs, Forestry & Fisheries

It is worth noting that the total number of rhinos poached in South Africa had increased from 13 in 2007 to peak at 1,215 in 2014 and has marginally reduced each year since. These numbers are jaw-dropping and unsustainable. The South African authorities, for reasons best known to themselves, no longer publish regular poaching statistics. Why hide the true situation? If the official numbers are not made public, people will make up their

own numbers. My personal view has always been that the official statistics are understated by up to 20 per cent simply because where the rhinos roam, the authorities don't find all the carcasses – the Kruger Park is a vast area, about the size of Israel or Wales and, it is also sparsely populated, so the number of dead rhinos since 2007 is more likely to be closer to 9,500 in total.

This dire situation persists despite millions of dollars being thrown at the anti-poaching onslaught – conservative estimates are more than R600 million (US\$45 million) and yet the poaching numbers remain stubbornly high. One could argue that the reason for the recent decline in the reported numbers is because the few remaining rhinos are that much more difficult to find.

Corruption is rife at every level of government in the countries of Africa and Asia involved in rhino poaching. Further, human lives are at stake. The poachers are ruthless, as evidenced by the near fatal stabbing attack on Dave Powrie and his wife in 2015; Dave is the warden of one of South Africa's best-known game reserves.

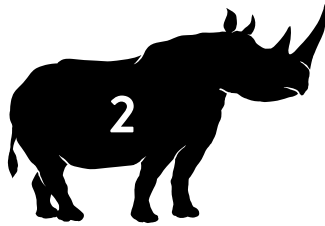
The conversation with Minister Molewa threw some light on why I was having so much difficulty with South African National Parks (SANParks) and other South African Government agencies in my attempts to source rhinos for the translocation program. I realised that TARP was going to be a very tough road to travel. I also sensed some resentment that it was Australia, rather than other countries, offering to assist.

With approximately 4,000 rhinos killed since the minister and I met, I very much doubt it's possible to see many rhinos around any corner. Tellingly, in a statement from July 2018, she said that strategies to keep rhinos safe from poaching now included

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translocation alternatives. What a difference a few years and 4,000 rhino carcasses make.

If anything, Minister Molewa's glib comments steeled my resolve to help prevent the extinction of this iconic species by bringing them to Australia.



## A FEW WILD IDEAS TO PROTECT OUR WILDLIFE

I spent thirty-three years of my life selling IT solutions in South Africa, Europe, Australia and Asia, and by my standards I had a successful career. Those who know me could never accuse me of being overly technical. The success I had in my sales career was almost entirely due to relationships. I worked really hard on building and nurturing such relationships, never more so than when we arrived in Australia.

With no money, no friends, leaving South Africa was tough. Margie and I had really good jobs in South Africa, great friends and a wonderful, if false, lifestyle. Arriving in Australia with a young family, a container of furniture and not much else, I determined there and then that I would focus on building relationships

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and a network in Australia, if not just for Margie and me, but for our children Paul, Kevin and Hayley. I did not regard this as a burden, I like people and I like meeting new people. My time as General Manager at Sydney University Rugby Club certainly gave me a head start. It is the epitome of a high-quality networking organisation.

I was born in Pietersburg in South Africa in the days when driving in the countryside, you would see kudu, impala, giraffe and, if you were really fortunate, a leopard. The Kruger National Park was three hours away and since the closest beach was about twelve hours away, we took all of our holidays in this paradise of wild animals.

My parents could not afford a car, so we would all squeeze into their good friends Frank and Phyllis Locke's vehicle and set off for the park. My earliest memories are of camping at Punda Maria or Pafuri with my sister and my parents; camp fires, communal toilets and animals calling in the night. I can still recall the awe and shock of meeting an elephant on one of the gravel roads near Shingwedzi. Fortunately, Frank maintained control of his car despite plenty of advice from the back seat. More than sixty years later, my love for wild animals, and the Kruger National Park, is undiminished and somehow, I managed visits to one or another game reserve every year until we emigrated to Australia in 1987.

Around 2009, news started to emerge about the threat of poaching in Southern Africa. Until this time, the region had been spared the onslaught on the rest of the continent's rhinos and elephants.

Well before TARP was established, as I thought about the perils of endangered species and how the whole poaching issue



was spiralling out of control, I had what I thought was a great idea and called the CEO of the World Wildlife Fund, Jim Leape, at the Switzerland headquarters. I was connected with the Chief Operating Officer, who was quite encouraging and suggested that I write to Jim and outline my proposal.

*"I am South African born and now live in Australia. Growing up, I was fortunate enough to be taken to the Kruger Park by my parents on an annual basis. Wildlife and conservation have always been extremely important to me and my family. As you know, the poaching situation with a number of species is dire, with elephants and rhinos of particular concern, and I'm sure front of mind for the WWF.*

*Here in Australia, and I am sure across the rest of the world, there is an endless stream of advertisements that feature the 'African Big Five' and other endangered animals such as tigers and cheetahs.*

*If your product is 'fast', the cheetah is featured in the advertisement; if your product is 'strong', the rhino or elephant are featured or, if your product depicts stealth, it is tigers or leopards and so on. The question is, how can we harness this global interest in wildlife and direct some proceeds of using their images for marketing purposes into endangered species conservation?*

*My proposal is that each global Fortune 500 CEO be approached with a request that, should their company wish to feature any such endangered species in their advertising (and they should be encouraged to do so), that company would pay a nominal 'commission or fee' to the WWF for the use of that image. My sense is that the commercial world has changed and*

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*continues to change and executives are much more aware and concerned about public perception of their products or services than ever before.*

*These companies may well ask 'What's in it for me?' and there are many answers to that question, including ensuring that such animals are not confined to zoos in the future; being seen as good corporate citizens as well as demonstrating good faith in humanity. In terms of cost to these organisations it would be miniscule. In terms of benefits and the goodwill which would be generated, these are infinite. So many people want to contribute but don't know how to go about it. They want to ensure that their children and their children's children will experience the magic of animals in the wild as opposed to seeing some sad creatures in a zoo.*

*In return, these global organisations would be permitted to use the WWF Panda logo as a certification. This would add enormous credibility to their advertising campaigns – the Panda logo is an extremely powerful brand. The competitive nature of business is such that if just one organisation signs up, others will rapidly follow.”*

I really thought that this proposal was exciting, had merit and was worthy of discussion and a trial, but the response that I received from Suds, Head of WWF Communications, was disappointing. Jim asked him to review my suggestion and while Suds agreed that WWF was in a position to drive change, the company's strategy aimed at encouraging businesses to tackle climate change. WWF worked with companies to transform the way they do business and influence markets, bringing together investors, consumers and political leaders to work through complex issues, but his view was

licensing on corporate advertising would not fit with their “current business engagement strategy.”

I saw this as a pretty poor response and felt that Jim Leape/Suds had not given my idea a great deal of thought; it was a potential winner for all parties. That was the end of the conversation, but in truth, the proposal is even more valid today than it was four years ago. Perhaps a WWF executive might read this book and have a light-bulb moment.



A young rhino greets the day. (Photo credit: Shannon Wild)

Undeterred, a few months later, I reached out to Pfizer Corporation, the manufacturers of Viagra, with what I thought was another absolute cracker of an idea to curb the usage of rhino horn in Asian countries. Throughout my career, I had come to realise that if you want something to happen, you start at the top of the tree and I wrote to Ian Read, CEO of Pfizer International in New

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York, requesting his support for what might be called a “left-field” proposition. I explained who I was and briefed him about the three rhinos being killed each and every day by poachers for their horns which are believed to have magical powers, including curing cancer and also improving sexual performance. I stressed that there was no clinical evidence to support any such claims, but that the demand for horn was actually on the increase because of the increased affluence of the Vietnamese and the Chinese – the biggest users of rhino horn. *“I passionately believe that rhinos must be available to the world in the wild, not only in zoos.”*

I then outlined my proposal that we work with his team at Pfizer on a campaign which basically said, “Viagra works. Rhino horn doesn’t”.

As I said to Ian, this may seem simplistic, but the message was crystal clear and I concluded by saying, *“This is not a frivolous exercise, we cannot allow the oldest mammal on our planet to become extinct on our watch”*.

Soon after, I received a response from Ms Oonagh Puglisi, Director, Corporate Responsibility, Pfizer Foundation, who was asked by Ian Read to respond and she said that, unfortunately, Pfizer were not in a position to extend support. Their strategy was *“to improve access to quality health care for underserved populations and their current focus was directing support towards non-communicable diseases, healthy aging and cardiovascular disease prevention.”*

She had shared my proposed campaign slogan with their Viagra commercial team, but they were unable to provide endorsement to the idea, saying that, *“Viagra is a prescription-only medicine indicated for the treatment of erectile dysfunction in men.”*

Well, not surprisingly, I didn’t think that was a particularly

helpful response; they had missed the point. I wasn't requesting support. I wrote back asking if we could have a telephone hook-up to discuss the proposal. Her response took quite a while, but eventually Ms Puglisi wrote back, saying that the idea was not a fit for funding from Pfizer and that they focus on the areas where they believe they can make the greatest difference and have focused on health care.

I hate being patronised and, in this instance, I really felt I was being patted away to extra cover. I wasn't asking for funding but was strongly of the view that wildlife trade is a global issue and will only be solved when the world realises that. So back I went. I had spent most of my life working for global American companies and was very familiar with the bureaucracy these organisations seem to breed. I wrote that while their decision was disappointing and I did understand their position, the world had to do something about educating the users of rhino horn and that a powerful message from a global leader in pharmaceuticals, such as Pfizer, that they were wasting their money and pushing an iconic animal into extinction was not only a positive message but a critical one. I concluded by reminding Ms Puglisi that solving this crisis was a global responsibility.

The dogs bark, but the caravan moves on.

By this time, I was pretty fired up and, unperturbed, I decided to approach Eli Lilly, the makers of Cialis – the competitor to Viagra. I wrote a similar letter to Ms Becky Morison, General Manager of Eli Lilly Australia, and received a response basically saying that they could not participate. I figured that I had nothing to lose and phoned Ms Morison. She turned out to be a terrific, sympathetic and passionate person who really wanted to help, but

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whose hands were tied by the constraints of her firm. She was kind enough to drop me a line after our conversation.

*“Gosh Ray . . . as much as I love your initiative, I need to be transparent that submitting a request might not be a good use of time. I would not want you to take the time to complete and submit the application, when you likely have options with a closer fit.”*

So here we are, several years later and more than 5,000 rhinos dead in the interim, I still think it is a really good idea. Good friend, Julie Furlong, owner of the Design+Marketing Agency, pointed out that what I should have done was to include some potent imagery of a limp and droopy rhino horn. This may have made more of an impact.

Onwards and upwards.



Graphic by Julie Furlong of D+M Pty Limited

In May 2013, my wife Margie and I were attending a wedding on the beautiful Hamilton Island in the Australian Whitsundays when I received an SMS from an unknown South African number. It turned out to be from Humphrey McAllister, with whom I had worked many years before at IBM in Johannesburg. Humph was deeply concerned about the plight of the rhino population in South Africa and, being a direct kind of guy, asked me to establish a breeding herd in Australia. Humph moved fast and followed up with a well-thought-out note reasoning why I should give this a go and why Australia seemed ideally suited as a destination.

*“It will need movers and shakers like you to get things going, Ray.”*  
Thanks, Humph.

With the full support of my family, I decided to give it a go. My first visit to the famous Kruger Park had been when I was just four years old. I loved it and have loved it ever since. In addition, I had “sort of” retired but didn’t really have the appetite to play golf five days a week or to spend my remaining years sitting in front of a computer swapping silly jokes with my retired friends. So why not, but where to start?

I called Glenn Phillips, CEO of the Kruger Park, for some “off the record” advice. He said that they were looking at all possible options and were currently moving rhinos to undisclosed “safe” havens in other parts of the country. He agreed that the situation was critical and their ability to fight the poaching scourge in such a vast area with limited resources was near impossible. He added that my type of solution could be one of the options in the tool box.

Being the eternal optimist, I took Glenn’s advice as positive and my first phone call was to longtime friend Allan Davies. Allan

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and I met when our sons were at The King's School in Sydney, and we had been on rugby tours to France and New Zealand for Rugby World Cup tournaments. Why did I phone Allan? Demonstrating just how naïve I was, I knew that he and Lyn owned a large property in the Hunter Valley, north of Sydney, and quoting another Aussie mate: "*Ray thought he'd have a few rhinos running around the back paddock of Allan's place.*" Well not quite, but in truth not that far off.

The Australian Rhino Project was born on 1st June 2013. A relatively simple idea that was to become immensely complex and far-reaching. Margie and I met Allan and Lyn at the Boatshed Restaurant on spectacular Balmoral Beach. Allan's first reaction to my plan was one of uncontrolled mirth but once this had subsided, he looked at his wife Lyn and said "We're in." Allan is a fairly serious individual and also very conservative. How conservative, I was yet to find out. However, being the man of action that he can be if he believes in something, by the end of that day he had set up a meeting with the University of Sydney Veterinary School to discuss my proposal.

The Vet Faculty moved equally quickly and within a week Allan and I were sitting across the desk from Professor David Emery and Jackie Dalton. There are people one meets in life who immediately display their intellect and wisdom – David was one of these. David has a seriously impressive resume holding the title of Professor of Veterinary Parasitology at the University of Sydney. He had visited Africa on several occasions and clearly understood what we were trying to achieve and why. From that moment he was on our side. He made some enquiries from a friend in the Department of Agriculture who responded that the animals to be



imported had to first spend a year in quarantine in “*an approved country/zoo or wildlife park*”. The ground rules were therefore very clear, although over time, they were cleverly manipulated by the Department of Agriculture to make compliance exceptionally difficult, if not impossible.

David alerted us by saying that we would fail unless we engaged with Taronga Zoo. This came as a shock to me – it wasn’t something that I had considered at all. While I do understand the need for zoos, I do not like them at all. The sight of an animal, such as a lion, in a cage is a complete anathema to me.

The Taronga Conservation Society Australia, to give its full title, is a NSW state-owned zoo with two campuses, one in the beautiful surrounds of Mosman in Sydney where, as the story goes, the giraffes have the best view of the Opera House and Harbour Bridge. The second campus is outside a country town, Dubbo, about five hours west of Sydney, known as the Western Plains Zoo. Like Taronga, it is a special place. It is set on 300 hectares and is much more a safari park than a traditional zoo.

Throughout the journey thus far, I felt that the day would come when someone would sit across the table, pat me on the knee and say, “*Ray, this is a great idea and we admire your creativity and passion, but, sorry, old chap, it just won’t work.*” Was this about to happen when we met the Taronga management? Allan and I braced ourselves for what we expected to be a polite rebuff. But as Mark Twain said, “*The secret of getting ahead is getting started.*”

My heart sank when David had said that we had to engage Taronga. Bringing rhinos from South Africa to live in an Australian zoo was never the objective. Allan, a man of the land, felt exactly the same way. Hence, it was with a very low level of expectation

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that we arranged a meeting with Cameron Kerr, Chief Executive of Taronga at his lovely office in Mosman.

Well, what a pleasant surprise for both of us. Unbeknown to us, Cam had long held the desire of doing something for the conservation of rhinos in Australia. After a lengthy and lively conversation, Cam gave us his in-principle support for two reasons – obviously conservation, but also to introduce some genetic diversity to the rhinos at Western Plains. He also provided us with a brief history of Taronga's long association with rhinos, having acquired its first black rhino way back in 1938. The decline of wild rhino populations spurred the organisation's former CEO, Dr John Kelly, to make a commitment to rhino conservation by becoming a founding member of the International Rhinoceros Foundation (IRF) in 1991. The IRF's principal objectives include support for in situ conservation projects for all species of rhinoceros and the development of captive breeding programs.

All of the world's five rhino species are on the verge of extinction and Taronga focuses on three species: the southern black rhino (critically endangered); southern white rhino (threatened), both from Africa, and the greater one-horned rhino from India and Nepal (vulnerable). When we met in 2014, Western Plains was home to twelve black and five southern white rhinos.

Initiatives to establish a captive breeding program at Western Plains began in 1990 with negotiations between the IRF and the Zimbabwean Government and eventually one male and seven female wild-caught black rhinos from the Zambezi Valley arrived in late 1992, imported under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Government of Zimbabwe. This translocation was fully funded by the late Kerry Packer.

Prior to their arrival in Australia, the rhinos were quarantined on the Cocos Islands in the Indian Ocean for two months. A further four males were imported from the US in 1994 and breeding began in that year.

White rhinos have been at Taronga since 1980, when three animals were received from Europe. Over a period of twenty years, six calves were born, four of which died. In 1999 an Australasian region plan was initiated to acquire more rhinos and “target managing” them in more natural social groups of a male with multiple females since no successful breeding had occurred for the past ten years.

What really interested me was that in 2003 Taronga received two male and three female white rhinos from the Kruger Park. All these rhinos were wild-caught and then managed through the Australian authorities’ prescribed pre-export quarantine facility in Kruger. Two of the females went to Monarto Safari Park in South Australia and the remainder to Western Plains. All of the costs were met by the two zoos. Since then each of the three imported females had birthed a number of calves. I was encouraged by the success of the previous precedents of importing rhinos to Australia thus giving me confidence that my plan could actually work.

We all agreed that to advance the project we needed to conduct a formal feasibility study, looking at vital logistical issues such as biosecurity; the regulatory hurdles that would be posed from government; possible timelines; and the funding challenges with a view to making a “go or no go” decision. Our unanimous view was that if we were to proceed with our plan, we would do it properly.

Cam Kerr’s contribution was to provide a skilled resource from Taronga to lead the study and he made sure that we understood that

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we would be required to pay full market rates for such a resource. This came as a bit of a surprise that Taronga insisted that we pay commercial rates – full freight – for the costs of their nominated leader of a feasibility study. I thought at the time “*Is this really a partnership, aren't we all trying to achieve the same goal?*” Cam knew that we had no money but costed the resource at approximately \$30,000 – a lot of money in anyone's language. Thank goodness Allan Davies, and not for the last time, undertook to chip in and cover this cost. With the benefit of hindsight, perhaps this was a tactic by Cam to scare us off. I was subsequently told that he is regularly approached with grand schemes to save this, that or another species and, not knowing us at all, he placed us in the high-risk category.

Cam was rightly very proud of the success of the breeding program at Taronga and we left the meeting with his tentative support and a clear understanding that Taronga was completely risk-averse. I also had the distinct feeling that Cam was pretty certain that he would not see us again – that this plan would prove to be all too hard and we would give up.

I undertook to prepare a discussion paper outlining the scope of a feasibility study and as I wrote, I surprised myself as to how clear my vision was. This was so important, since the study would make or break the project.

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**PROCEEDS FROM THIS BOOK  
GO TO THE  
BLACK MAMBA  
– ANTI-POACHING UNIT**

Founded in 2013 to protect the Olifants West Region of Balule Nature Reserve the Black Mambas were invited to expand into other regions and now protect all boundaries of the 62,000 ha Balule Nature Reserve, part of the Greater Kruger National Park in South Africa.

The objectives of the Black Mamba project are not only the protection of rhinos through boots on the ground but also through being a role model in their communities. These 22 young women and 1 man want their communities to understand that the benefits are greater through rhino conservation rather than poaching, addressing the social and moral decay that is a product of the rhino poaching within their communities.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO DONATE VISIT:  
[WWW.BLACKMAMBAS.ORG](http://WWW.BLACKMAMBAS.ORG)**



‘What will future generations think of us when they  
look back and rhinos are only in a picture book?’  
— Dr Jane Goodall DBE

*The Crash of Rhinos* is a play on words. A ‘crash’ is the collective noun for rhinos, but it also describes the carnage wrought by poachers in Africa who have slaughtered more than 10,000 rhinos — three a day— in the past decade to feed the seemingly insatiable demand for rhino horn in some Asian countries.

The author spent his first forty years in South Africa and during this time developed a love of wildlife. After emigrating to Australia, Ray retained strong ties with African wildlife and conservation. In 2014 a friend suggested that he investigate the feasibility of bringing rhinos to Australia to act as an insurance policy in the event of the possibility of the extinction of rhino species in the wild.

The Australian Rhino Project was born.

*The Crash of Rhinos* traces the origin of the Project to the present situation with the team still working to relocate rhinos to Australia. It is an insightful, frustrating, humorous and humbling story that will make you laugh, cry and tear your hair out in exasperation. In Ray’s own words, ‘There was extreme joy and there was acute heartache’.

This fascinating story demonstrates what can be achieved by one person with the passion, resilience and dogged persistence to meet challenges, obstacles and the glacial pace of governments — even in the face of a crisis.

The proceeds of this book will be  
directed to the South African all-female  
anti-poaching group, The Black Mambas.  
[www.blackmambas.org](http://www.blackmambas.org)



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