PRESS RELEASE

A New Generation Begins: Final Female Rhinos Arrive in Zinave National Park

The last of three major translocations strengthens Zinave's breeding population and advances a long-term mission to restore rhinos to one of Africa's most remarkable conservation recovery stories

EMBARGOED UNTIL THE RHINOS' RELEASE ON 8 JUNE 2026

Zinave National Park, Mozambique, 2–4 June 2026

This week, Mozambique completed the final phase of a landmark rhino restoration effort, with nine female white rhinos successfully translocated to Zinave National Park in a complex cross-border operation.

The latest arrivals mark an important milestone in re-establishing a viable black and white rhino populations in Mozambique after more than four decades of local extinction, while strengthening one of southern Africa's emerging conservation landscapes and tourism destinations. The translocation was undertaken by Mozambique's National Administration for Conservation Areas (ANAC), Exxaro Resources and Peace Parks Foundation, with the support of South Africa's Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment.

The nine females bring the number of white rhinos introduced to Zinave to 39, joining 22 critically endangered black rhinos already reintroduced to the park. Together, they form the first viable founder populations of both species established in a Mozambican national park, with both species already breeding and giving birth after introduction.

The rhinos are protected within a specially developed high-security sanctuary, supported by significant investment in ranger capacity, surveillance systems, monitoring technology and specialised protection infrastructure.

As keystone species, rhinos play an important ecological role in shaping and maintaining healthy ecosystems. Their return represents a major milestone in Zinave's broader recovery as Mozambique's first "Big Five" national park, strengthening the park's tourism potential and contributing to the wider restoration of the Great Limpopo transboundary landscape.

A mere decade ago, Zinave was called the silent park. Years of conflict had stripped the landscape of all its wildlife, leaving the park unable to function as a healthy ecological system.

The 4 080 km² park has since undergone a remarkable recovery effort grounded in a 20-year co-management agreement between the Government of Mozambique and Peace Parks Foundation. Since 2015, 2 431 wild animals across 16 species have been reintroduced, including elephants, buffalo, leopards and hyenas, growing the total population to just under 10 000 head of game.

Rhino translocations are among the most complex operations undertaken in wildlife conservation. They require extensive planning, veterinary expertise, specialised capture and transportation equipment, and post-release monitoring to ensure the safety and wellbeing of every animal. While the translocation itself required months of operational coordination, the conditions that made it possible were built over years of protected area restoration creating a safe home for the new arrivals.

"This translocation marks a chapter of pride and hope in Mozambique's conservation journey," said Pejul Calenga, Director-General of ANAC. "By returning white rhinos to Zinave, we are not only securing the future of a keystone species but also restoring ecosystem balance, creating investment opportunities in the wildlife economy, supporting local community development, and demonstrating what is possible when partners work together for nature."

Exxaro donated the rhinos through its partnership with Peace Parks Foundation, recognising the need to expand secure habitat for rhino conservation beyond South Africa's borders.

Exxaro CEO, Ben Magara, said: "Exxaro is proud to partner with Peace Parks Foundation and other stakeholders in advancing our sustainable growth and impact strategy. Through this collaboration, we aim to create a lasting positive impact on ecosystems throughout our operations and beyond. At the heart of this effort is the protection and preservation of our most important stakeholder – the environment. It is only through public-private partnerships that we will be able to respond adequately to the many challenges that define our time."

Zinave forms part of the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area, a 100 000 km² cross-border landscape shared by Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe. The landscape includes some of southern Africa's most important protected areas and reconnects wildlife populations across borders.

Since 2015, Peace Parks has invested USD 34 million in Zinave's restoration. This includes rebuilding park infrastructure, establishing a skilled ranger force, strengthening monitoring and security systems, and supporting community development programmes that directly benefited 3 000 people in 2025 alone through agriculture, pastoralism and beekeeping initiatives.

With wildlife returning and tourism gradually increasing, Zinave is steadily moving towards financial sustainability. In Mozambique, 20% of park-generated revenue is shared directly with surrounding communities, helping ensure that local people benefit directly from conservation success.

“Zinave shows what is possible when long-term commitment, strong partnerships and local leadership come together,” said Werner Myburgh, Chief Executive Officer of Peace Parks Foundation. “The return of rhino reflects years of investment in restoring a protected area that benefits both wildlife and local communities.”

Media pack: Click here

EDITOR’S NOTES

Mozambique Government’s National Administration for Conservation Areas

Founded in 2011, National Administration for Conservation Areas (ANAC) of Mozambique is an institution of the State responsible for the conservation of biodiversity and the sustainable development of ecotourism in Mozambique. Its main functions involve planning, coordination and implementation of activities in conservation areas, in partnership with other organizations and local communities. Conservation Areas managed by ANAC occupy about 25% of the Mozambique’s national territory, including seven parks, seven national reserves, and 70 sport hunting areas divided into 20 official hunting grounds, nine hunting blocks, and 13 community programmes.

Visit www.anac.gov.mz to learn more.

Peace Parks Foundation

Founded in 1997 by President Nelson Mandela, HRH Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands and Dr. Anton Rupert, Peace Parks Foundation is a non-profit organisation pioneering conservation at scale across southern Africa.

Working through Transfrontier Conservation Areas that span national borders, Peace Parks reconnects ecosystems, strengthens local economies and helps secure the natural assets on which communities depend. Its holistic approach is built on three pillars: conservation at scale, community development and commercial sustainability, ensuring that protected areas deliver long-term ecological and economic value.

To date, Peace Parks has helped governments protect 775 000 km², co-manages eight parks where wildlife populations have rebounded fivefold, and supports more than 280 000 people annually through its interventions. With formal government mandates and strong community partnerships, Peace Parks offers a proven model for building resilience for both people and nature across southern Africa’s most significant landscapes.

The Foundation’s Vision 2050 is to secure 17 fully functional transboundary landscapes spanning 980 000 km², making it the world’s largest land-based conservation initiative.

Visit www.peaceparks.org to learn more.

Exxaro Resources

Exxaro Resources Limited is a South Africa-based diversified natural resources company and one of the largest black-empowered businesses listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE). Exxaro has operations in South Africa, with business interests extending to Europe and Australia. The company's primary assets include coal, manganese, a growing energy solutions business, equity-accounted investments in iron ore and base metals, predominantly zinc, with acquisitive growth ambitions in energy transition metals.

For more information, please visit www.exxaro.com

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