

## **Growing Eco-Tourism, Sun City partners with Pilanesberg Wildlife Trust to help conserve the rhino**

Sun International's flagship resort, Sun City, is now offering guests a *Rhino Notching Experience*, giving them the chance to contribute towards saving rhino alongside the Pilanesberg Wildlife Trust. Guests will help a vet and work with park management officials to individually notch, implant an ID tag as well as collect DNA from the selected rhino, this will help identify and conserve the rhino. These procedures assist park management to monitor and manage their rhino populations

Imagine getting close to a rhino, pressing your ear against its thick, rough skin to hear its heart beat, and feeling its breath on your skin. It's a rare privilege to be able to touch and appreciate this defenceless, endangered herbivore. Guests will also have direct contact with these magnificent creatures while being able to capture the moment.

Rhino populations in Africa are dwindling as continued poaching puts their survival under threat. This unique experience is a once in a lifetime opportunity aimed at assisting the park with its conservation efforts by cataloging and monitoring individual rhino in the malaria free Pilanesberg National Park, bordering Sun City.

Notching rhino, putting ID chips in their horns and taking DNA from every animal, are procedures being added to park managements stringent security measures already in place to deter poaching.

Once the rhino is adequately sedated, ground crew and guests move in on foot and carry out the necessary procedures, guest can actively take part and assist the vet and park crew during the operation.

Said Perry Dell, Pilanesberg Wildlife Trust Marketing and PR Manager, "Notching the animals – giving them an individually based identification system – is core to the gathering of vital data. All data captured during the field expedition – *Rhino Notching Experience* - is recorded alongside any future observation by rhino monitoring officers, creating a biological database."

Perry added that we humans are the voice of the voiceless. "The public need to stand up for these creatures."

However the costs involved in a rhino immobilisation for this vital management operation, are high.

Sun City Environmental Manager, Danie Boshoff said, "We are passionate about our environment and understand the value of sustainable practices and thus are on a drive to

encourage and grow eco-tourism at Sun City. Each animal forms an important part in the ecological balance of the nature. It is the conservation of this balance that we aim to achieve through our partnership with The Pilanesberg Wildlife Trust.

“Sun City and the Pilanesberg National Park have a long partnership having opened days apart in 1979. We as a resort encourage guests to the area to experience the wonders of African nature. However this would not be possible if we were unable to preserve the area.

The Pilanesberg Wildlife Trust approached us with a challenge they were facing and we decided to partner with them to create the *Rhino Notching Experience*. Guests now get to experience a ‘once in a lifetime’ event, as well as contribute to the conservation, and furthered protection, of these amazing creatures.”

Guests programme includes the following:

- Guests are briefed by Park Ecologist, Steve Dell on the general aspects of the rhino, poaching as well as “do’s & don’ts” while at the notching. The vet provides guests with information on the veterinary procedures to be performed.
- The vet and pilot then fly around the property to find a suitable rhino, guests then move to the area the rhino is in.
- After the vet darts and immobilises the rhino, guests can approach once it has been established that it is safe to do so.
- Immediately after the rhino is immobilised the vet and park ecological services, helped by guests, do the necessary notching and DNA collection.
- Once all veterinary and ecological work is done, and in consideration of the rhinos’ absolute welfare, individual and group photos can be taken.
- When all the required aspects are completed the vet will reverse the anesthesia, which wakes the rhino up within three minutes.
- Guests, at a safe distance, can watch the rhino wake and move off back into the bush. The whole experience can take between 90 minutes and 3 hours, depending on group numbers.
- The group size is limited to 15 persons per rhino. In winter it is possible to notch 4 to 5 rhinos back to back.

“The rhino’s safety, welfare, and dignity, is our priority at all times. The rhino notching will be halted immediately if the Vet attending to the rhino decides it is at risk,” Concludes Perry.

For more information contact [Mankwe Gametrackers](http://Mankwe Gametrackers) on +27 14 552 5020 or [suncity@mankwegametrackers.co.za](mailto:suncity@mankwegametrackers.co.za).

For more information about [Sun City](#) and the reloading of the Entertainment Centre visit, [#NewSunCity](#). Connect with us on Facebook [SunCitySA](#) or Twitter [SunCityResortSA](#). Remember you can now book [flights to Sun City](#).

Ends

---

**ISSUED BY THE MAIL ROOM PR ON BEHALF OF NICOLE TURNER, PR MANAGER AT SUN CITY. FOR MEDIA ENQUIRIES PLEASE CONTACT:**

**Azelle Evans | Cell: 082 851 0090 | [azelle@themailroom.co.za](mailto:azelle@themailroom.co.za)**

**Cerise Mtshatsheni | Cell: 0762362702 | [cerise@themailroom.co.za](mailto:cerise@themailroom.co.za)**

**Kerry Webb | Cell: 082 496 0713 | [kerry@themailroom.co.za](mailto:kerry@themailroom.co.za)**

### **About Sun International**

The Sun International brand has a proud legacy in the gaming, hospitality and entertainment sector. Its superior hotels and resorts portfolio makes it a recognized premium brand. The Sun International Group has a diverse portfolio of assets including world class five star hotels, modern and well located casinos, and some of the world's premier resorts. Our destinations offer experiential luxury, enduring quality and incredible adventure, supported by an authentic dedication to personal service.

Today, Sun International is one of Africa's largest tourism, leisure and gaming group and operates or has an interest in a total of 18 resorts, luxury hotels and casinos. Our entry into Latin America began in Chile in 2008 and has been a success story for the Group, giving us the track record and confidence to look for more opportunities that offer gaming opportunities in the region. Sun International's Latin American portfolio (Monticello Grand Casino in Chile, the Ocean Club Casino in Panama and the Sun Nao Casino in Colombia) has now been merged with the casino and hotel portfolio of Chile-based leader in the gaming and entertainment industry, Dreams SA, making it the largest gaming company in Latin America with operations in Chile, Peru, Colombia and Panama.

Our real competitive advantage stems from the fact that we have a compelling and global competence in both the development and operation of casinos, hotels and resorts – and at the same time we are extremely comfortable operating in emerging markets.

Our approach has been to differentiate our hotels, resorts and casinos in architecture, service, experience, location and the mix of entertainment and activities. Creating lasting memories for our guests and customers is a core part of our DNA. We've created some of the world's most iconic hotels ranging from The Palace of the Lost City at Sun City to The Table Bay Hotel in Cape Town. The creative architecture of these properties and the blending of their designs with their local environment make each property unique.

Sun International was the pioneer of gaming in southern Africa, having brought casinos to this part of the world in the late 1970s. The opening of Sun City set the standard for large-scale international events in South Africa, which continues today. Sun City is also home to the Nedbank Golf Challenge which has attracted the world's best golfers for over two decades. From the hosting of Miss South

Africa to World Heavyweight title fights, the Sun City Superbowl remains the preferred venue for international events and entertainment.

We place a strong emphasis on being responsible corporate citizens through our contributions and commitment to the economy, communities and the environment.

We are committed to the development of all our employees and we make sure that equal opportunities and economic empowerment form the backbone of our human resource practices.