

Leadership

GREEN EDITION

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MAGAZINE

INTERVIEWS • INSIGHTS • INTELLIGENCE

Kingsley Holgate
Africa's Greybeard

Adrian Gardiner
Cherish our world

Dr Ian Player
Our pioneer of conservation

Climate change
Hot air or not?

Rhino Rage
Dissecting the problem

Exclusive

The Elephant Whisperer

Tributes to Lawrence Anthony





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Leadership celebrates the life of Lawrence Anthony, the larger-than-life conservationist, best-selling author, environmentalist, explorer and animal saviour, with tributes from his family and friends. This special Green edition of *Leadership* also features the great Dr Ian Player, Adrian Gardiner and Kingsley Holgate.



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This Month In History

7 June 1893 – Mahatma Gandhi is forcibly removed from a whites-only carriage on a Pietermaritzburg train for not obeying carriage segregation laws.

28 June 1919 – The signing of the Treaty of Versailles formally ends World War 1. Germany is forced to give up Alsace-Lorraine and its overseas colonies and pays reparations of DM132 billion (\$442-billion in today's terms). The treaty also prohibits German rearmament.



2 June 1959 – Following the infamous Treason Trial, ANC leader Chief Albert Luthuli is banished for five years by the apartheid government.

21 June 1965 – Gary Player wins the US Open golf tournament and becomes only the fourth player to earn all four top pro golf titles. Player, from South Africa, is the first non-American to achieve this feat.

16 June 1976 – The Soweto Student Uprising begins as a peaceful protest march against the use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction in black secondary schools. It soon escalates into a nationwide revolt.

5 June 1981 – The Centre for Disease Control and Prevention in the United States reports that five men in California are suffering from a rare pneumonia that weakens the immune system. These are the first recognised cases of Aids.

30 June 1997 – In Hong Kong, the flag of the British Crown Colony is officially lowered at midnight and replaced by a new flag representing China's sovereignty and the official transfer of power.

1 June 2002 – Former South African cricket captain Hansie Cronje dies along with two pilots when his aircraft crashes in the Southern Cape.

14 June 2005 – President Thabo Mbeki sacks Deputy President Jacob Zuma after the latter is implicated in corruption during the trial of his former financial adviser, Schabir Shaik.



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NEW AFRICA PUBLICATIONS'S MAGAZINES LTD



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FOREWORD

Cherish the world

To be asked to write the foreword to the Green Edition of one of South Africa's foremost publications is not only an honour but also a privilege, which I will treasure for the rest of my life.

Although, through my upbringing in Rhodesia (as it was called then) and my exposure to nature and wildlife in the 1950s in that country, my life as a 'commercial' conservationist only began in 1990. This, as many of you know, was when the concept of Shamwari (meaning 'friend' in Shona) was conceived.

At the outset, there was no business plan or an intention to commercialise a typical South African game farm for family pleasure. The reason the thinking changed is because the investment increased to the extent that pleasure alone was no longer a viable option. The Eastern Cape was experiencing a severe drought and more and more farms contiguous to the first purchase became available. It was not long before the area of abused, drought-ravaged and overgrazed land was 8 000 hectares. The rest is history, in that today Shamwari comprises approximately 25 000ha of a complete ecosystem – from the dung beetle to the elephant, with the traditional 'Big Five'.

Shamwari has been the recipient of many international awards for conservation and tourism. The real legacy of this venture is that the Eastern Cape has become a destination for wildlife viewing with at least 14 other competitors following our example. This is a positive conservation story, and one for which the entire team associated with this extraordinary achievement needs to take credit. Besides the team effort, however, I would like to give special credit and mention to a person who changed my life and taught me about the real world in conservation: Dr Ian Player. One of my regrets is that Ian and I met only 20 years ago and over that time – besides becoming one of my best friends – he introduced me to many of the world's leading non-traditional, non-scientific conservationists.

My life has been enriched through meeting such great personalities, to mention a few: Dr Nick Steele, John Aspinall, Sir Laurens van der Post, Jack Hanna and Anton Rupert. Together with Ian, these people encouraged me through difficult times, both economic and political.

There is a thought that wildlife enterprises take up too much land and deprive the disadvantaged population of agricultural tenure. It was only when we proved the economic benefit of tourism attractions, through the number of employees

and the economic multiplier effect, that notice was taken of these attractions.

Over the last 20 years, I have also become a realist. The opening paragraph of Robin Banks' foreword in the last edition of *Leadership* for me really goes to the heart of where we are today. I quote, "One does not need to be a rocket scientist or clairvoyant to realise the world is in transition and we are undergoing a major shift on the planet."

I analysed this statement in a few ways and focused on Africa. At the 17th Conference of the Parties climate change summit, Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu reminded us that "God wants us to live in a garden, not a desert". Why is it, then, that we wish to breed this planet into a dustbowl? It is this reproductive capacity that is the cause of our man-induced climate change. There is an outcry about fracking in the Karoo to which I also subscribe; however, would we ever have to think about this abhorrent practice if we did not have to sustain an out-of-control population growth from unsustainable natural resources?

Africa is the last continent in the world and is still relatively unexploited – is it not for this very reason we see the colonisation of Africa by the new so-called next superpower China – "Beware" Repeated famine in parts of Africa are interpreted as failure in agriculture and lack of aid, but seldom considered due to overpopulation.

Enjoy this Green Edition of *Leadership* and the personalities embellished herein. I hope you will give some thought to the few words I have written and expand on other atrocities with which we are faced, to name a few: the out-of-control rhino savagery, the poaching of elephant for ivory souvenirs and, more recently, the export of lion bones – fraudulently sold for the making of 'tiger wine'.

For my parting shot, I quote from a letter to the editor of the *Cape Times*: "[P]overty reduction, sustainable development, unemployment, biodiversity loss, water shortages, xenophobia, crime, a decent education and health system – none of these can be effectively addressed in Africa in the long term without controlling levels of human population growth". A taboo that is a 'no-go' arena for our politicians.

As chairperson of the Wilderness Foundation (founded by Ian Player 50 years ago), we will continue the fight to cherish this wonderful world of immense beauty, wildlife and people.



Adrian Gardiner

Leadership

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The emperor has no clothes

By now, you and every voting citizen have seen the controversial work (now altered) by Brett Murray. The Goodman Gallery's 'Hail to the Thief II' exhibition had a portrait of President Jacob Zuma in the heroic pose of Lenin, grandly in command, hand-mapping the way forward ... with his 'spear of the nation' protruding from his trousers.

Some *Twitter* comments expressed it as powerful symbolism, but were countered by loud voices of horror and condemnation by those who didn't get it.

"Is it art?" Not in the sense of beauty or qualities that uplift the spirit (nor is it a piece I would gaze upon to sustain my soul), but yes, in terms of terms of political satire expressing the perception that millions in this country have of the president, and which millions choose to ignore.

It "depicts me in a manner that suggests I am a philanderer, a womaniser and one with no respect ... My portrait is meant to convey a message that I am an abuser of power, corrupt and suffer political ineptness." (Zuma's own words!) Perceptions are in the eye of the beholder.

As for the nakedness, nudity does shock, taunt, titillate and tantalise as it is not our common view of people. The more pompous, arrogant, powerful or abusive and out of touch a person becomes, the stripping of his robes of office is a way of calling him back to Earth.

In Australia, a 12-page cartoon calendar lampooning politicians of every stripe has the country (and those portrayed) in howls of laughter: the Premier of tropical Queensland sports a great banana; the Premier of the state of South Australia, who promoted the arts, wears a tutu and cod piece; Prince Charles, with big ears and nose, has his equally well-endowed family jewels tied in a royal blue ribbon. Such is the maturity of freedom of expression in that democracy.

The point of this column is to say thank goodness we have freedoms to enjoy. In China, Murray would be in jail; in Robert Mugabe's country, the thugs would have beaten him to a pulp; in North Korea, Our Beloved Leader would simply have made him disappear.

The big winner here is the right to freedom of expression, in any form.



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and flourishes.

ROYSTON LAMOND
Publisher

Business Connexion launches Energy Efficiency Services



Jaco Moolman

In a move which demonstrates its ability to innovate and participate in the salient issues of the day, in this case our national energy shortage, ICT services company Business Connexion launched its Energy Efficiency Services on the back of a signed partnership agreement with Eskom as an official Energy Services Company (ESCO).

Jaco Moolman, Managing Executive for Energy and Industrial Solutions sees the rebates from Eskom of R5.45 Billion for its Demand Side Management programs as the ideal catalysts to introduce this new offerings to our big industry players, including the mining sector, petrochemical, retail, financial services as well as vast opportunities in the public sector.

Studies to establish energy efficiency comparing South Africa to other countries with a similar per-capita GDP, indicate that South Africa is more electricity-intensive by between 35% - 65%, of which a significant proportion is estimated to arise from the use of less energy efficient technologies and production processes. This leaves substantial opportunities for energy saving.

Furthermore, in line with international governance trends, local companies are likely to be legally bound to adopt sustainable business practices at some point in future. Requirements such as the reduction of a

In this year's State of the Nation address, President Jacob Zuma made particular mention of the country's energy and electricity pricing. He is urging South Africans to save energy: "There is an ongoing concern from business and communities about high electricity costs. I have asked Eskom to seek options on how the price increase requirement may be reduced over the next few years, in support of economic growth and job creation and give me proposals for consideration. However, to achieve sustainability, a pact will be required with all South Africans – including business, labour, municipalities, communities and all customers and suppliers. We must save electricity."

company's impact on the environment, amongst others, are being supported by developments such as new building standards.

There is an urgent need to accelerate energy efficiency projects to reduce the growing energy shortfall. Tariff increases of 25% have already been approved. However Government has set a goal of influencing business to reduce consumption by 10% over a three year period.

As an Eskom-approved Energy Services Company (ESCO) Business Connexion is accredited to identify opportunities for achieving reductions in electricity consumption and the scoping and execution of such projects. The company offers integrated energy management solutions including energy audits, assessments, financing, commissioning and ongoing management, offering financial benefits, improved performance of plant and reduced maintenance.

With electricity prices escalating steeply, Vanessa Olver, Business Connexion Deputy CEO and Group Executive: Services says that more than ever, efficiency has become a necessity not only to manage costs, but also to prevent a recurrence of the load shedding of 2007.

As an Eskom-approved ESCo, Olver says Business Connexion has demonstrated its suitability and competence to develop and deploy technology which will conserve power within the Commercial and Industrial environments.

"As a specialist in the design, delivery and operation of data centres, our ESCo status gives Business Connexion the ability to develop and deploy technology which reduces the demand on the national grid, while delivering its clients' computing needs at optimal cost. By their nature, data centres and enterprise computing systems consume a lot of energy. However, there is

definite room for improvement and scope for optimisation to ensure that there is no wastage of any resources, electricity included," continues Olver.

"Optimising not only the costs but also the actual consumption of electricity is critical from another perspective, too - with limitations on the availability of electricity supply to data centres, it is imperative to get maximum computing power from every kilowatt hour, to keep enterprise computing on," she explains.

The ESCo status is afforded to Business Connexion's Energy and Industrial Solutions Centre of Excellence, itself within the company's Professional Services division. The company qualifies for Eskom funding where it can demonstrate reductions in electricity consumption internally and for its clients.

Barry Bester, Manager – Industrial Solutions, Professional Services at Business Connexion adds: "Essentially, this means that when we help our clients to deploy energy efficient technology, a rebate could offset the cost of that technology."

For more information on Energy Efficiency Services, please contact: Jaco Moolman, Managing Executive for Energy and Industrial Solutions at Business Connexion, Tel: 011 266 1065.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

We all need to be conservationists

“Every wild thing is in tune with its surroundings, awake to its fate and in absolute harmony with the planet. Their attention is focused totally outwards. Humans, on the other hand, tend to focus introspectively on their own lives too often, brooding and magnifying problems that the animal kingdom would not waste a millisecond of energy upon. To most people, the magnificent order of the natural world where life and death actually mean something has become unrecognisable.” – Lawrence Anthony in *The Elephant Whisperer*

When I read these words, it was like a kick to the solar plexus. I cannot imagine ‘our human predicament’ being described in a more emphatic manner. We have become the most efficient predators on Earth by using our unique mental abilities and complete self-interest to shift the harmonious equilibrium of the natural world around us. The saddest thing is that many people could not really give a hoot.

The annual Green edition of *Leadership* is always my favourite issue of the year. I marvel and envy at the incredible work and passion that people such as Dr Ian Player, Kingsley Holgate, Adrian Gardiner and the late Lawrence Anthony have put into the preservation and care of our planet and the animals with which we share it.

As a nation, we should not expect nor depend on our government to be occupied with conservation. There is simply too much going on in the world for that to be its main concern (or even close to it – they seem more intent on concentrating on portraits displaying our president’s nether regions, but I digress). We need to be more effective at garnering widespread recognition that this environment is not ours by accident. We all need to work to sustain it – and this needs to start with each one of us. We then must pass on this mindset to our children who, in turn, we hope will pass it on to their own.

We are capable of destroying, protecting or creating habitats for wildlife and ourselves. Our unique ability to plan and predict probable outcomes of our decisions allows humans to affect wildlife populations. We implement our decisions for the future through considered action as opposed to the passive reaction of wildlife to events of the moment. Therefore, humans must logically assume responsibility for conservation.

So I urge you to take your children out to visit the national parks. I urge you to stand up and be counted in the fight against poaching. If we spend more time witnessing the way our wildlife is in tune with our surroundings, perhaps some of it will eventually start rubbing off on us. The alternative is that the only elephants, lions or rhinos your grandchildren will see will be on old rand notes or on *Discovery* channel reruns!



ROBBIE STAMMERS
Editor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robbie Stammers', written in a cursive style.



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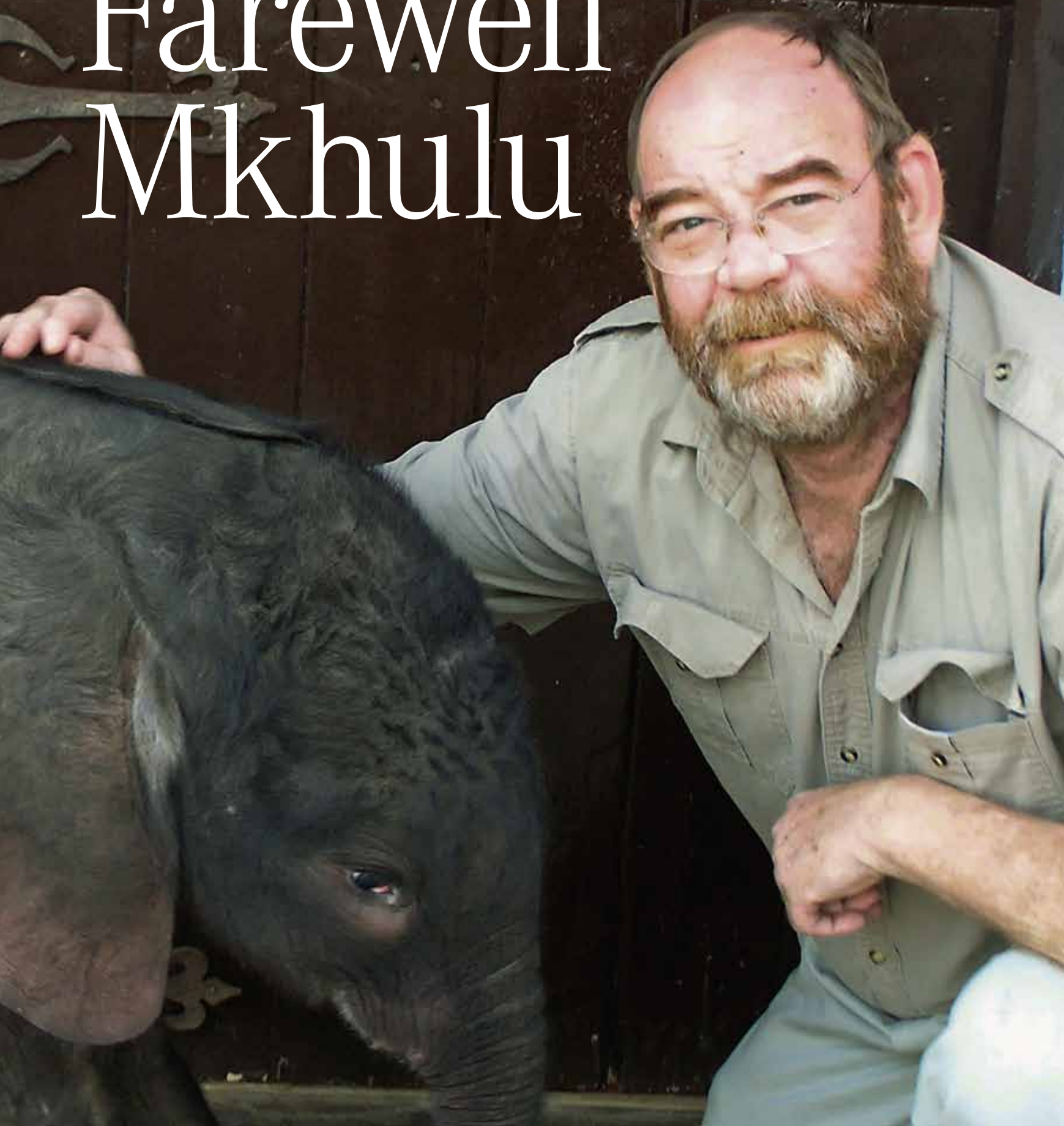
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Farewell Mkhulu



A tribute to Lawrence Anthony

“Total immersion in the wilderness is the purest and most natural of all therapies. Best of all, you don’t have to do anything except be there. The sights and sounds are remedies for the soul, while the scents of the African bush are nature’s original aromatherapy.”

These are the penetrating words of Lawrence Anthony, the larger-than-life conservationist, best-selling author, environmentalist, explorer and animal saviour, written in his third and, sadly, final book, *The Last Rhinos: My Battle to Save One of the World’s Greatest Creatures*.

At age 61, he died of a heart attack before his planned March 2012 conservation gala dinner in Durban to raise international awareness of the rhino-poaching crisis and launch his new book, but he will live on through his immense contributions in a way that will never die.

Known as the ‘Indiana Jones of Conservation’, Anthony was born in what used to be Northern Rhodesia (Zambia today) and spent time in Malawi as a child. “The bush was right outside the back door,” he has said about that time.

Educated first at King Edwards VII School and then in Empangeni, he was a successful businessman and estate agent, but it was only after he made Thula Thula – the oldest proclaimed game reserve in the country – his home, that his true calling took flight.

Anthony’s tales of taming rogue elephants, rescuing zoo animals in war-torn Iraq and meeting with the world’s most wanted terrorists (the Lord’s Resistance Army) in the depths of the Democratic Republic of Congo to try and save the last Northern rhino, bear testament to the fire that burned in his belly. He would have done anything and everything to save the world’s animals.

His books tell one about much more than the adventures on which his quests took him; they tell the story of a deep and resounding love for Mother Nature and her creatures, as well as his desperate urge to save many from extinction. Anthony had two loves in his life. One was his wife and Thula Thula partner, Francoise Malby; the other was his ‘mistress’, the matriarch elephant called Nana.

One cannot truly describe the incredible relationship he and Nana had, but he firmly believed that elephants had a psychic ability, and this seems to have been confirmed after his untimely passing.

Anthony had made a decision about a year ago to distance himself from the once rogue herd, as they were becoming bigger – as was the number of tourists coming to Thula Thula; he did not want to endanger either party. He still met with Nana in the bush, where she would separate herself from the herd to be with him. But besides those special encounters, the herd had not been near the main lodge for more than 15 months.

Within a few days of Anthony’s passing, the entire herd arrived at his house and came back every night for an entire week before departing again into the bush. He was convinced that he could communicate with them on another level; their miraculous salutation only proves this was so.

I was deeply touched by Anthony’s words in his books and felt as if I had come to know him like an old friend. It saddens me that I will never have the opportunity to meet him in person, but he has not left Africa yet. A poem by my sister, Bridget Dore (opposite), sums it up perfectly.

The next few pages are dedicated to the legend of Lawrence Anthony from those who knew him best. First are two features by his

friend, travel writer Roy Watts. These are followed by dedicated tributes penned by those whom he has left behind.

Since he was known as the Great Elephant, let me say: *Hamba kahle, Ndlovu Mkhulu!* (Go well, Great Elephant!)

Robbie Stammers
Leadership editor

Africa I smiled

Africa smiled
A little
When you left.
“We know you,”
Africa said,
“We have seen
And watched you,
We can learn
To live
Without you,

But
We know
We needn’t
Yet.”

And Africa smiled
A little
When you left.
“You cannot
Leave Africa,”
Africa said.
“It is always with you,

There inside your
head.
Our rivers run
In currents
In the swirl

Of your thumbprints;
Our drumbeats
Counting out your
pulse,
Our coastline,
The silhouette of your
soul.”

So Africa smiled
A little
When you left.
“We are in you,”
Africa said.
“You have not
Left us,
Yet.”

© Bridget Dore



Photo: Roy Watts

The Elephant Whisperer

This is a tale about love across the species line. It starts years ago when Lawrence Anthony, a passionate conservationist, jumped off the commercial hamster wheel to develop Thula Thula, an attractive game lodge near the Umfolozi Reserve. A two-hour drive north of Durban, it is built on a giant lawn and has an ambience spawned by his perfectionism and the French flair of his charming partner, Françoise. It is also a gourmet paradise.

Roaming around the hills and valleys of this pristine wilderness are impala, kudu, nyala, zebra, giraffe, rhino, warthog, hyenas and the love interest of this tale, Nana – matriarch to a band of reformed elephant delinquents.

After watching a savage *Carte Blanche* documentary on the brutal taming of the Tuli elephants, Anthony made an unsuccessful attempt to acquire some of these unfortunate animals, but they had already been placed in various game reserves. The Elephant Management & Owners Association learnt of his need and came to light with a herd of seven jumbos from Mpumalanga, and they were darted, loaded on trucks, sedated and sent on a nine-hour road trip.

On arrival at Thula Thula, they were corralled into an electrically fenced boma to be acclimatised prior to release. This did not suit them at all, and by 5 a.m. the next day they had flattened the boundary fence with a huge Tamboti tree and started the long walk to the freedom of the north.

A frantic search ensued, led by the attractive blonde Françoise, asking all and sundry in her deep French accent whether they had seen a

herd of seven elephants go by. In an area that had not seen a jumbo for at least a century, this must have seemed slightly south of surreal, to say the least.

A helicopter joined the search, located the animals, and in a skilful piece of flying the pilot managed to herd them back to within 20 metres of Thula Thula. But night was falling and the wily Nana retreated into thick bush, and under the cover of darkness they managed to reach and break into the Umfolozi Game Reserve. Here the truants really let rip. They broke into an anti-poaching unit cabin, scattering bedding, clothes and rations all around the countryside. If that was not enough, in a stunt akin to schoolboys debagging a headmaster, they charged and traumatised the senior manager of Umfolozi.

At this point, KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife stepped in with a check into the history of the animals, coming to the conclusion that they were incorrigible, and that permission should never have been given to relocate them to Thula Thula in the first place. Its immediate inclination was to shoot Nana and the adults, then return the rest of the herd to the wild.

Meanwhile, Anthony was offered R100 000 for the herd by a Chinese zoo agent, who then mounted an assault on his initial reluctance by gradually upping the bid to R300 000. Jumboed out as he was after their high jinks, it is a tribute to Anthony's resolve that he managed to walk away from this offer to throw himself at the feet of KZN Wildlife in a plea for a second chance. Reluctantly, it relented and, under the threat of a death sentence for a repeat performance, the elephants were darted and returned to the Thula Thula boma, now wisely bereft of Tamboti trees.

Dawn broke, and with it a hungover and seriously ticked off herd of elephants put on a full display of their restlessness. Mindful of the extermination threat, Anthony decided that he was going to stay close to them for as long as it took to gain acceptance. For the next two weeks, 24 hours a day, he lived at the boma, constantly patrolling the perimeter, talking and singing while they stomped around mad as hell, flapping their ears, trumpeting and showing all the signs of great elephantine displeasure.

After a fortnight of chatting and crooning, and close to being classified as a 'hoarse' whisperer, Anthony decided to take a coffee break up at the house. When he left, the air was thick with malice and resentment, but on his return a

palpable calm had taken its place. Cautiously he approached the fence, and stood face to face with Nana the matriarch. In a scene that could have been culled from *The Taming of the Shrew*, she tenderly put her trunk through the electrified wires and started gently touching him. At this point, Anthony decided that it was now or never, and he released the herd into the Thula Thula reserve.

On their release, their calm demeanour remained, and he followed them from a distance of 50 to 100 metres in his double-cab bakkie to get them accustomed to his car. Their first sortie followed the perimeter fence, which they tested every few metres by placing their trunks just below the middle strand to sense the electrical field. They soon gave up on this, and settled into a normal routine.

Two weeks later, Anthony was woken up at 2 a.m. to find the herd serenely munching the thatch outside his house. He continued talking to them, and he realised that he was in a relationship with Nana as she proceeded to touch him through the open door. This ritual continued for several nights as he and his roof

continued to host them between 2 a.m. and 5 a.m. each morning.

But the biggest surprise of all was to come several weeks later when Nana returned one night to introduce Anthony to two new members of the herd. It turned out that she and her sister, Frankie, had been pregnant throughout the whole induction saga; at a time when most elephants would be protective and temperamental, she had chosen to present the babies to him.

The bond between Anthony, Nana and the herd continued to increase. They got to recognise the sound of his car, and when he stopped anywhere near them, he was quickly surrounded by unbounded enthusiasm. We are not talking *corps de ballet* here, and this fervour has already cost him several dents and a couple of broken windows. And his popularity is such that he is now able to walk freely among them. This all led to the most amazing development of all: his ability to summons them with a lengthy yell, just as Tarzan did in those old-time movies.

In a recent visit to Thula Thula, I was able to witness this extraordinary phenomenon

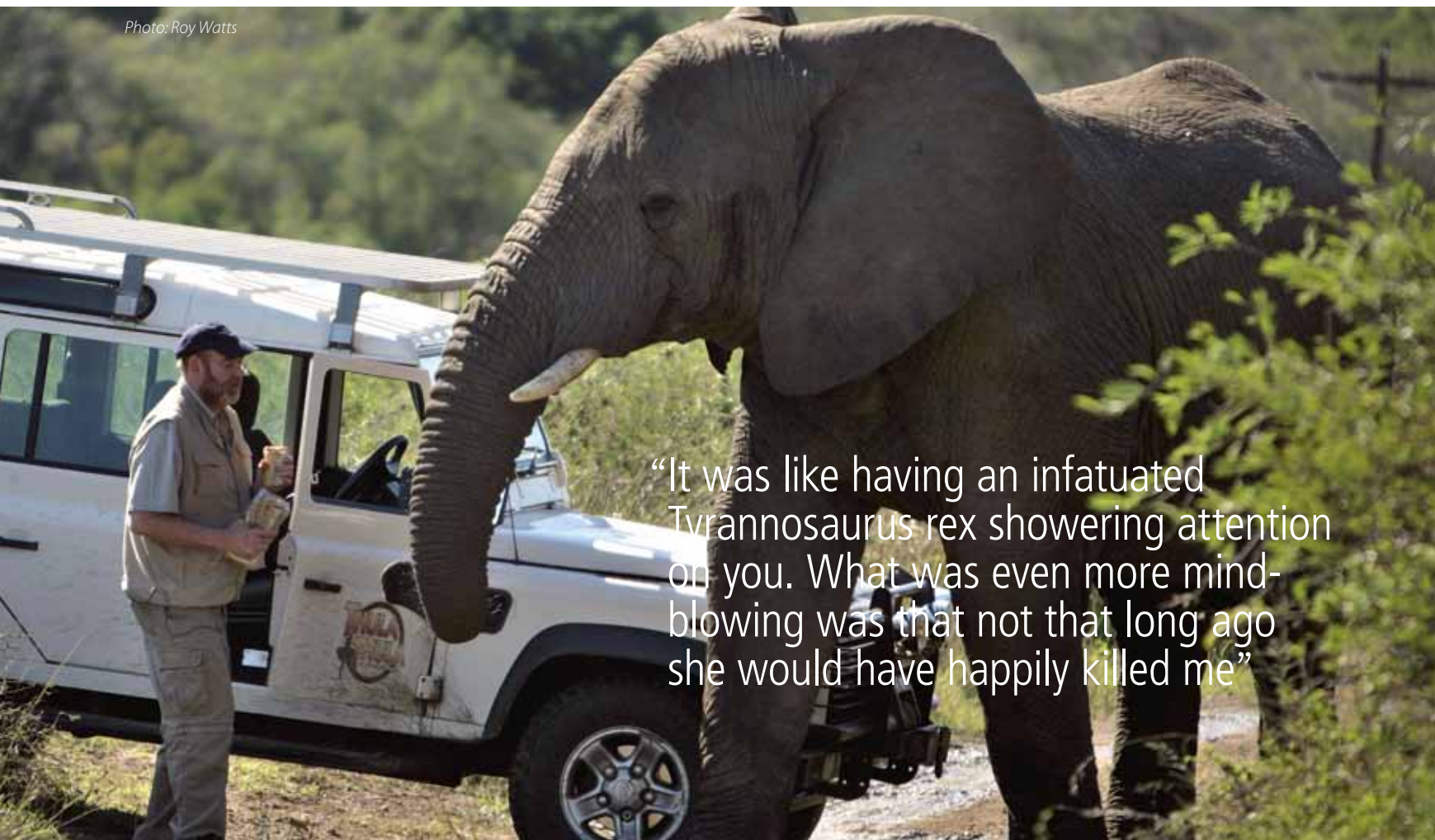
firsthand. We stopped on an open plain when we saw the herd some distance away. Anthony gave his clarion call and started a mini stampede. In seconds we were in a grey forest of legs, trunks, flapping ears and missionary zeal. This was truly one of my most memorable experiences.

It must be remembered at all times that these are still wild animals, and visitors to the lodge will see them in much the same way as tourists do on game drives in similar reserves around the country. This is due to the fact that Anthony has gone to great lengths to keep his unique relationship with the herd separate from mainstream Thula Thula activity.

With peace and tranquillity returned to this beautiful resort, Lawrence Anthony has recently found himself in the spotlight on the global stage. He was presented with The Earth Day medal and the Earth Day award in a ceremony at the United Nations, for his heroic exploits in rescuing the Baghdad Zoo in the midst of the Iraqi conflict. A latter-day Lawrence of Arabia, so to speak. But that is another story. ▲

Roy Watts (First published in 2004)

Photo: Roy Watts



“It was like having an infatuated Tyrannosaurus rex showering attention on you. What was even more mind-blowing was that not that long ago she would have happily killed me”

Babylon's Ark

The man who saved the Baghdad Zoo

When coalition forces invaded Iraq in 2003, Lawrence Anthony contacted the United States Consulate to find out whether any provisions had been made for the Baghdad Zoo, the largest in the Middle East.

When he discovered that it did not feature at all in post-invasion plans, he mounted an audacious (some would say naïve) rescue effort.

Although this story takes place beyond African borders, this is a story about how a South African saved Baghdad's zoo.

There was devastation everywhere: Tank tracks ran between the enclosures, a direct hit had destroyed a lion's cage, and the walls were riddled with bullets. The smell of rotting carcasses filled the air, and thick carpets of flies covered piles of excrement and detritus. Just metres from the concrete walkways, unexploded

fragments of cluster bombs lurked; while taps, toilet bowls, furniture, roofing sheets – in fact, every scrap of workaday infrastructure – had been raided or blown away.

Iraq's Baghdad Zoo, one of Saddam Hussein's propaganda showpieces, had once boasted an inventory of 650 animals and birds. But all that remained was a scraggly band of 30 desperately weak tigers, lions, bears, porcupines and boars – all animals with strong survival instincts and a capacity to defend themselves from the onslaught of determined, hungry looters. This was the scene that confronted Anthony, who had arrived in Baghdad just nine days after US tanks rolled into the city.

When coalition forces invaded Iraq in April 2003, Anthony, who owns and runs Thula Thula, a private game reserve and lodge in KwaZulu-Natal, saw history preparing to repeat itself. During the conflicts in Kuwait, Kosovo in Serbia and the Afghanistan capital of Kabul, the zoos were annihilated by a combination of military

vandalism, civilian slaughter and neglect. He approached the US Consulate in Durban to establish what arrangements had been made to save the largest zoo in the Middle East and discovered that, despite an entire government-in-waiting, there was no hint of concern for the zoo – this from two nations, America and the United Kingdom, where animal welfare is a national priority.

With a determination born of obsession, he decided to visit Baghdad and embarked on an obstacle course littered with bureaucratic dead ends, obstructive government officials and an occupying army that considered him an intrusion.

But in war there are heroes behind desks as well as in the trenches, and the nightmare of red tape was eventually broken by Kuwait's deputy minister of Animal Health and Agriculture. The minister had witnessed the destruction of his own country's zoo during Operation Desert Storm, and issued the requisite permit to enter Iraq.



Iraq's Baghdad Zoo, one of Saddam Hussein's propaganda showpieces, had once boasted an inventory of 650 animals and birds. But all that remained was a scraggly band of 30 desperately weak tigers, lions, bears, porcupines and boars

Obtaining permission was one thing; getting there was quite another. The coalition forces wanted nothing to do with Anthony, so with a combination of heroic chutzpah and monumental naivety, he hired a Toyota Cressida and left Kuwait early one morning with two employees from the Kuwaiti Zoo who knew the back roads.

En route they passed what remained of an uneven contest. The crack Iraqi Medina Forces had been routed in a matter of days, which led to the collapse of the entire army, and the path was strewn with burnt-out tanks and vehicles, abandoned Scud missiles and thousands of uniforms discarded by fleeing soldiers.

After nine hours and 600 kilometres, Anthony and his companions arrived at a very jittery Baghdad, and the first of several US checkpoints. The checkpoints had already been targeted by suicide bombers and were armed with tanks, machine gun nests and orders to 'shoot to kill'. He approached the guard with his hands held high. "Hi, I'm Lawrence Anthony from KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa, and I've come to ..."

"Back off!"

"No, you don't understand. I've come to restore Baghdad Zoo ..."

"BACK OFF!"

Anthony is a good listener, and there was sufficient menace in the last command to send him scuttling down the road to another checkpoint where he modified his approach.

Enter Captain Sydelik, a chunky American in an armoured troop carrier, who escorted the Toyota Trio to the zoo. He would become a great facilitator, smoothing Anthony's introduction to Baghdad.

The zoo was in a corner of the 100-hectare Al Zawra Park, a once beautiful piece of land that had been ravaged during the battle for Baghdad. That any animals were alive at all was thanks to the zoo's deputy director Dr Husham Mohamed Hussan, who had come to work every day despite not being paid for months. He welcomed the new arrivals with open arms.

Wandering around, the South African began to appreciate the enormity of the task he had set himself. The zoo, like the rest of Baghdad, was without power or water, and constantly under attack from looters.

To give Anthony a small measure of mobility, Sydelik's men taped the word 'ZOO' in large letters to the hired Toyota and approval was arranged at the checkpoints so that he could

scour Baghdad's volatile, dangerous streets for supplies.

He wanted to set up camp on the premises, but Sydelik insisted that he stay with the tanks and tank crews that invaded Baghdad at the Al-Rashid, an erstwhile luxury hotel.

Conditions there were far from comfortable: there was no running water or electricity, Anthony's room on the seventh floor was a mosquito-infested sauna, and there was only one shower between 400 men – but it was safer than remaining at the zoo after dark.

After a night filled with the ceaseless cacophony of gunfire, something that would continue for most of his time there, Anthony started his restoration project in earnest.

Zoo director Dr Adel Salman Mousa rounded up a couple of men and together they began the back-breaking task of finding and transporting supplies. In a basement at the Al-Rashid, they came across a treasure trove of buckets, disinfectants and cleaning materials, and at one of Saddam Hussein's palaces they 'requisitioned' a generator.

Hussan, a veritable Mr Fix-It, discovered a huge pipe running through the park which still had a supply of water, and he jury-rigged a feeder that dripped into waiting buckets.

At another of Hussein's residences, the team found a freezer full of meat that had, until then, survived the looters. It provided immediate relief for the starving animals and was an important stopgap until the zoo's butchery was recommissioned to slaughter donkeys.

Three days into the operation, the nationality of Anthony's travelling companions was revealed and they fled back to Kuwait in the hired Toyota, leaving Anthony stranded in a war zone. By the end of the second week, however, the zoo's workforce had swelled to eight as eager employees returned. A month later, Brendan Whittington-Jones, Anthony's right-hand man at Thula Thula, also arrived.

Living at the Al-Rashid, Anthony developed a great relationship with the US forces, especially Captain William Sumner, who supported the project with vehicles and manpower. These resources eventually turned the tide against the looters, many of whom were armed, and was a key factor in the zoo's salvation. (In one drastic action, the troops rounded up a hard-core mob and imprisoned them in one of the cages for a few days.)

Not only did Anthony enjoy the support of the US army, but he also succeeded in winning over the locals and engineered a level of co-operation between the two parties that was almost unheard of.

When another basement in the hotel yielded huge supplies of rice, flour, maize and other basic commodities, these were distributed among the zoo staff – a well-deserved reward for their loyalty and hard work. Anthony himself was sustained by a daily allocation of three litres of bottled water and three army ration packs.

As the restoration progressed, the focus shifted to rescuing animals stranded in the other facilities.

First was the transfer of four ostriches from one of Uday Hussein's love nests. In a caper that could have come from a *Monty Python* episode, one ostrich was coerced into a troop carrier, where it glared out indignantly over the sides. The intention was for the other three birds, each guided by two attendants, to follow the vehicle slowly on foot. This did not suit the birds at all, however, and they took off. Clinging desperately to their charges and using their wings as feathered ailerons, the minders hurtled along the streets of Baghdad, through checkpoints, around traffic, over obstacles and, in all likelihood, past snipers. In a feat of low-flying, they steered the ostriches to the zoo, where miraculously they came to rest in the designated enclosure.

Uday Hussein's various residences proved to be a major source of animal exotica. Six peacocks were rescued from the same enclosure as the ostriches (but were sadly lost to looters) and, at another palace, six sub-adult lionesses, two cubs and a couple of cheetahs were found in a debilitated condition. Using a large shield fashioned from a farm gate, Anthony and his team advanced on these animals and, in a heart-stopping bout of non-tranquillised snarling and spitting, managed to steer them into transportation cages. At yet another palace, they found a magnificent lion and two lionesses rumoured to be the man-eaters sustained by the love rivals and enemies of Uday Hussein.

Well into the relief effort, Anthony received word that a black-market outfit was trading animals illegally throughout the Middle East. He approached the coalition forces and was given six Humvees, a couple of trucks and 30



The US forces supported the project with vehicles and manpower

soldiers with which to 'engage' the owners. The standoff resulted in an increased population of badly neglected camels, foxes, monkeys and an enormous bear, whose translocation required darting equipment and a crane. After years of misery in a cramped and uncomfortable cage, it took up residence in a specially constructed enclosure complete with shade cloth and a pool.

Since his arrival in Baghdad, Anthony had heard much speculation about the whereabouts of Saddam Hussein's 40 magnificent Arabian stallions, whose bloodlines stretched back to the Crusades. When a former Hussein employee revealed their location, the US forces again stepped in and 17 of the stallions were reclaimed in the suburb of Abu Ghraib. They were in superb condition and, after a sojourn at Baghdad University, were stabled at the zoo.

While the stallions were being rescued, Anthony prepared to travel to Los Angeles to raise desperately needed finance. There he embarked on a series of lectures and television interviews, and raised US\$90 000 (over R700 000).

The money was channelled through the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), whose emergency relief team was leaving for Baghdad with rations, medicines, equipment and vehicles.

Lieutenant General Jay Garner, then the senior US civil administrator in Iraq, visited Anthony and handed over US\$20 000 (more than R160 000), declaring the Baghdad Zoo to be the only functioning entity in the city.

Anthony managed to convince the coalition that the 100ha park surrounding the zoo was a pivotal facility and that the restoration of its lawns, lakes and waterways would be a worthwhile public relations exercise.

In the months that followed, Anthony and IFAW were assisted (or hampered, in some instances) by visiting non-governmental organisations and animal welfare organisations, and he continued to shuttle between Europe, South Africa and Iraq – raising funds and generating awareness.

After six months, with the zoo in good hands, Whittington-Jones was appointed operations manager and Anthony returned to his beloved Thula Thula.

Roy Watts

First published in National Geographic in 2004

A Leadership exclusive: Penned tributes from Lawrence Anthony's family and friends

Francoise Malby-Anthony Lawrence's wife

Lawrence was a free spirit who feared nothing and challenged life every day. He was a visionary wanting to make a difference in this world and who lived his passion to the fullest. He was an inspiration to all and changed many people's lives.

Lawrence was one of these born leaders who had a profound effect on every living and breathing creature and was loved by everyone. We all miss him terribly.

We have created the Lawrence Anthony Rhino Conservation Fund, which will focus on the security of our rhinos, Thabo and Ntombi, the two little orphans we adopted from the Moholoholo Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre in Limpopo. They were only four and eight months old when they first arrived at Thula Thula. They are now almost three years old. Thabo got shot at a month ago by poachers, but luckily he survived – but we had to seriously increase security.

The problem of rhino poaching was very dear to Lawrence, and this is how we intend to carry on his legacy at Thula Thula.

Adrian Gardiner Chairperson of the Wilderness Foundation, CEO of the Mantis Collection and founder of Shamwari Game Reserve

Like so many good things, they only happen late in life. I had the pleasure of meeting Lawrence Anthony in London some three years ago. What an extraordinary individual, and how interesting it was to hear firsthand of his animal rescue mission to Iraq and the famous elephant translocation on which his book was based.



Lawrence with his wife, Francoise Malby-Anthony

Thankfully, I visited Thula Thula on a few occasions and witnessed his extraordinary work; he also visited us at Shamwari. Both of us having lived in Zambia and Zimbabwe, we had many interesting connections.

An extraordinary man, a visionary, a storyteller whose life was too short. *Hamba kahle, Shamwari.*

Dr Ian Player Founder of the Wilderness Leadership School, International Wilderness Leadership Foundation, Wilderness Foundation SA, Wilderness Foundation UK, Magqubu Ntombela Foundation and World Wilderness Congresses

Lawrence Anthony was an extraordinary man, and his death is a great blow to wildlife conservation. He had been actively involved for many years, negotiating a corridor between the Umfolozi Game Reserve and the uPate Game Reserve.

Through a lot of hard work, he had convinced local people about the importance of having this corridor. He was loved and trusted by communities adjacent to the parks and much admired by men such as Dr Mangosuthu Buthelezi and Dr Ben Ngubane.

Lawrence became internationally known, first through his work with the zoo in Iraq, while the hostilities were still in progress. He certainly risked his own life in order to save the lives of animals that had been completely forgotten.

He also became famous because of his books, *The Elephant Whisperer*, and *The Last Rhinos*. The latter is of enormous importance because it exposes human beings as being so busy in our own involvement with politics, that an animal (the Northern white rhino) was allowed to go extinct.

I was in Uganda in 1961, and flew over the Congo and saw hundreds of Northern white rhino. It is tragic they are now gone. Lawrence risked his life once again, to talk to people who



Three's company: The Great Conservationists – Dr Ian Player, Adrian Gardiner and Lawrence Anthony

were killing the rhino, but in the end it was to no avail.

It is no surprise that the elephants at his Thula Thula Game Reserve were said to be looking for him shortly after the news of his death.

It was my great pleasure to have known him for many years and admired him for all that he had done for wildlife conservation.

Graham Spence

Journalist and editor. Originally from South Africa, he lives in England and is Anthony's brother-in-law. He and Anthony co-wrote all three of the latter's books.

We got the call at 5am. My wife Terrie (Lawrence's sister) took it. She nodded and put the phone down. She put her head in her hands. I knew what she was going to say. "Lawrence is dead."

Shock set in. I lay back, images flooding my mind. Lawrence ... my friend, my brother, albeit not in blood. You were the bravest I ever knew, and probably ever will.

In the process of writing three books together, I was privileged to spend much time with him. There were long nights in Baghdad, England, Durban and, of course, the paradise that is Thula Thula.

We talked non-stop – sometimes like fools, sometimes like sages. The latter is our opinion, of course.

I once committed a cardinal sin in Lawrence's eyes. It was during the Iraq invasion in 2003 and we were in Baghdad where he was saving battle-traumatised zoo animals against incredible odds, while I was working on the book, *Babylon's Ark*.

After two weeks, I said I had to get back to my day job. He was aghast. "This is where it's all happening," he said. "What's a day job? How boring is that?" I don't think he had ever consciously recorded the concept 'day job' in his life.

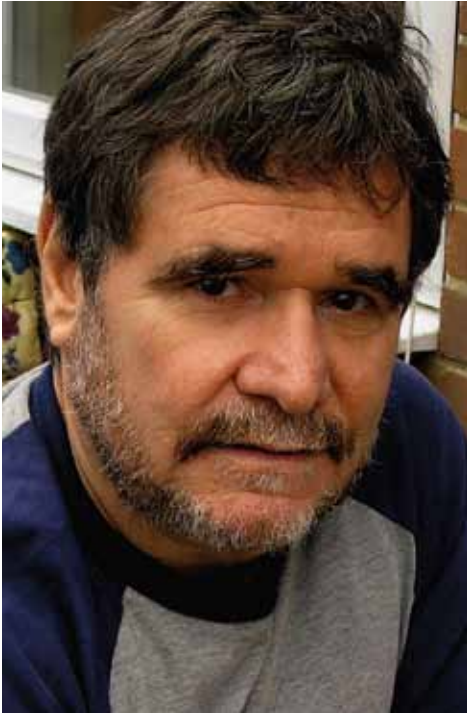
He said he would get me out of the war-ravaged country; in fact, he would also go back to South Africa for a couple of days for some

much-needed rest and recreation – a sort of Vietnam-era R&R.

There were no civilian flights from Baghdad, only military shuttles. To get on one required special persuasive skills, which Lawrence had in spades. What he said I do not know, but somehow we got seats. Neither did we have visas, so as the plane landed at the Kuwaiti Air Force headquarters, we slunk off down the runway and jumped over a wall out of vision of heavily armed guards. We then sprinted along the road to a car that Lawrence's friends had earlier arranged to take us to the civilian airport.

We weren't out of the woods yet. With all the foreigners around, Kuwaiti customs officials were itching to show Westerners who was boss. Consequently, we wanted to get out fast, as neither of us had any evidence of legal travel in the country. If they'd known we had been to Iraq without clearing customs, we'd have been jailed.

Lawrence, as only Lawrence can do, persuaded an air hostess to escort him onto a flight about



Graham Spence

to leave for Dubai, where he would connect to Johannesburg. He was waved past soldiers like a VIP, while I waited all night in a London-bound queue.

Then an aggressive Kuwaiti militia looked at my passport and started shouting, almost hysterically. Alarmed to my bones, I did what I knew Lawrence would do and smilingly said I was sadly leaving this beautiful city – and thanks for the memories. Somehow, inspired by Lawrence, I talked my way onto that plane. My wife's smiling face at Heathrow will remain with me forever.

Indeed, there was no situation that Lawrence believed he couldn't talk his way out of – or more usually into – whether it was the Lord's Resistance Army guerillas in Congo jungles; unpredictable African bureaucracy; or Saddam Hussein supporters with itchy trigger fingers.

We wanted to call our book (which is now out) *Blood Horn*. But that was due to the adventurer in Lawrence – we wanted an action title.

Lawrence probably would have hated me for saying this, but he was fundamentally an old-school adventurer. He would argue otherwise, but that's how I will always remember him. Obviously his adventures were underpinned

by his all-consuming love of the natural world, but he was – as *The Guardian* newspaper in London remarked – undoubtedly the 'Indiana Jones of Conservation'.

However, our more conservative editors were dead against a Wilbur Smith-style title for what is essentially a serious book, and decided on *The Last Rhinos*. I am relieved to my bones that they did so. None of us knew that in the end the title would be a magnificent metaphor for Lawrence himself.

In my day job, I am a journalist. I like writing best about people who are still out there somewhere: the wild ones, the mavericks, the passionate men and women who believe like monks in what they are doing. In other words, people such as Lawrence Anthony. The bravest, the most passionate, the most committed human being I have ever had the privilege to know.

Ah, Lawrence ... my friend, my brother. You drove us mad, but we loved you.

Roy Watts One of South Africa's top adventure and travel writers

What can you say about a man who went bouncing through Iraq's war zones in a hired Toyota en route to saving the Baghdad Zoo, negotiated with the generals of the infamous Lord's Resistance Army in the Congo in trying to hammer an agreement that might have saved the last few rhinos of a near extinct subspecies, and who had a long-standing cross-species love affair with a one tasked matriarch at Thula Thula – his game lodge in KZN.

Lawrence Anthony was imbued with a charming naivety that somehow did not see anything unusual in any of these escapades. He was a great raconteur, both verbally and in print.

I was lucky enough to be with him three times when he interacted with the herd. On the last occasion, I noticed that Nana, instantly recognisable for her missing tusk, was not there. When asked about this, he told me to wait, and we moved 100 metres down the road where we found her waiting for him under a tree. Just like all other women, she did not want to share him with the herd.

It must be remembered that these were former elephant delinquents that were going to be put down because they were considered incorrigible. The fact that he managed to tame

them by constantly talking to them while corralled within an electrified boma, is a modern eco-miracle.

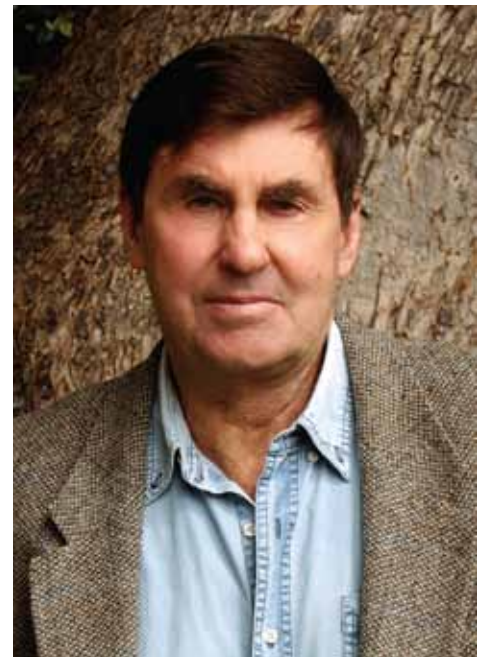
But it was his relationship with Nana that added a breathtaking dimension to this incredible tale. She was really possessive and protective of him and, in one instance, diverted a charge made by a young bull that did not understand the rules.

The other great woman in his life, Françoise – the charming French lady he met during a rainy taxi dispute in London – was his supportive partner throughout the genesis and development of Thula Thula.

She ran the whole game reserve and was a major factor in its success, introducing such innovations as bush weddings, conferences, among others.

Returning from one of his exhausting rhino-saving missions, Lawrence was told to get ready for a matrimonial event down at the lodge. On arrival, he discovered that what he believed to be a bush marriage was actually an ambush one. Françoise, who had been his partner for decades, had decided that it was time to tie the knot, and he thus became a dutiful husband.

Lawrence Anthony will be sorely missed – particularly if you happen to be a rhinoceros!



Roy Watts



Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi, Dr Ben Ngubane, Dr Ian Raper

**Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi
President of the Inkatha Freedom Party
and chieftain of the Buthelezi tribe**

I have been close to the Anthony family for many years. I worked with his mother, Regina, who remains a close friend. The family has suffered a great loss. Lawrence will be missed by many.

We are all proud of what he achieved internationally as a conservationist. People throughout the world respected him. But here in Zululand, we considered him one of our own and one of our greatest.

**Dr Ben Ngubane
African statesman and senior member of the
delegation that negotiated the end of apartheid. He has great interest in humanitarian
and environmental issues.**

Lawrence was a close friend of mine. The friendship was forged through a common concern and desire to do something about nature conservation as well as bringing knowledge about environmental and conservation matters to rural communities – especially the tribes people of kwaBiyela and kaMthethwa in northern KwaZulu-Natal (the area around Empangeni).

Lawrence was a wonderful person, one of a kind. He could go into a rural community and blend in with the traditionalists as easily as he would blend with the urban sophisticated. His commitment to the pursuit of social justice was unshakeable. He convinced the chiefs (indunas) and ordinary tribesmen that their well-being and prosperity lay in their allocating rural lands to conservation and creating protected areas for game and wildlife. He succeeded immensely in this, and so the Royal Zulu Biosphere – taking in the tribal areas of Biyela and Mthethwa – was born.

He persuaded Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife to hand over the Fundimvelo Game Park to the Biyela tribal authority and jointly managed this park alongside his own Thula Thula, and trained the Biyela people in conservation.

Lawrence so influenced and instilled conservation consciousness in the people to the extent that tribes people dealt with any poachers who dared to defend themselves.

We, the people who knew and worked with Lawrence Anthony, will miss him immensely. There are few individuals or organisations that have the passion and conviction about the environment and conservation the way that he had.

**Dr Ian Raper
National president of the Southern Africa
Association for the Advancement
of Science**

I can't think of anyone from conservation who was so impressive. I can't think of any politician who does more nation-building.

We went together to Kinshasa to try and save the last few rhino in the Congo and we fought the Kruger Park on the culling of elephants.

We had a press conference at the airport. He was so affable and friendly, but there was no mistaking his seriousness.

He introduced me to the Lord's Resistance Army in Pretoria after he had met them in the heat and dust. Lawrence got them to agree to protect the rhino and to repair the terrain. The UN heads in Congo were so impressed that they offered him all sorts of assistance.

It was a privilege to know Lawrence and to serve with him. He was marvellous. How does one appraise such a person? A magnificent legacy. ▲

*Compiled by Robbie Stammers
Grateful thanks to Francoise, Lawrence's wife
and Thula Thula partner, for her gracious
assistance*

THE 7TH ANNUAL

2012

SAEEEC SOUTHERN AFRICAN
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10th Celebration of the SAEE at the 7th Southern African Energy Efficiency Convention 14-15 November 2012, Emperors Palace, Gauteng

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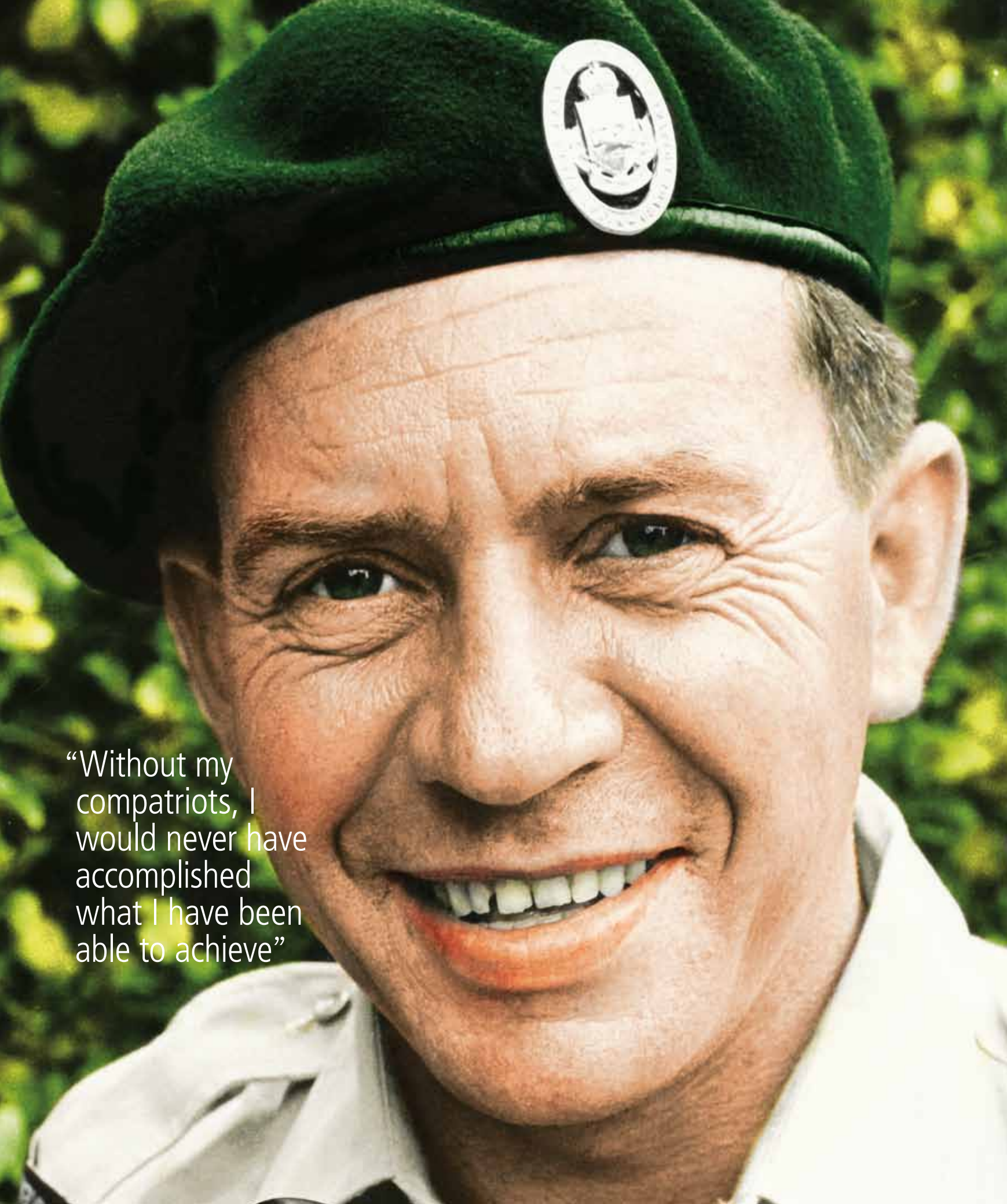
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2012SAEEEC Contact

For more information on the 7th Southern African Energy Efficiency Convention (2012SAEEEC) contact:
Erika Kruger, Convention Organiser
Tel: (018) 290 5130, cell: 082 428 7386
Email: convention@saeec.org.za



“Without my compatriots, I would never have accomplished what I have been able to achieve”

South Africa's Greatest Player

Dr Ian Player: Pioneer of modern-day conservation

There are two ways to leave an indelible mark on the world. One is to join the mainstream and float along on the current, gently nudging events or opinions onto a different course. The other way is to hold onto an uncompromising position in the face of overwhelming odds, to change prevailing thought through sheer force of will and let history judge you.

The men who created modern conservation were the pioneer game rangers from the middle of the last century. They lived hard lives in the heat and dust and fought prejudice, ignorance and greed. They battled the elements and the very animals they were striving to save. They were misfits and malcontents who saw things differently. They understood the bigger picture, they pushed the human race forward and they changed the world.

Dr Ian Player is one of these – an internationally recognised conservationist, educator, sportsman and activist. His entire life has been spent attacking the status quo, mobilising an unpopular point of view and challenging the conventions of the time.

As a boy at St John's College in Johannesburg, he devoured books on the wilderness adventures of pioneers and trailblazers, little dreaming that

he would become one himself. His great love was canoeing and he would often join friends on trips down the short, quick-flowing Natal rivers, where they dreamt up the idea of an endurance river race. The Duzi Canoe Marathon was to become the first of many innovations.

But it was not all fun and games: "When I did my first canoe journey down the Umngeni", Player says, "I expected to see lots of wild animals."

Player is not the sort who wrings his hands ineffectually. He immediately approached ex-British Army Colonel John Vincent, the head of the Natal Parks, Game and Fish Preservation Board, for a job.

The omens were inauspicious. Despite being a founding member and winner of the very first Duzi Canoe Marathon in December 1951, Player had been fired from his previous

"I see wilderness as the font of the spiritual experience, the new temple. There is not a religion that was not born in the wilderness."

This was 1950, after all, when Africa – legendary for its untrammelled wilderness, abundant game and limitless open spaces – was the home of the big game hunter.

"All I saw were two grey duiker", he continues, "and I was very distressed at that. There were no animals; they were all shot out."

job for returning late from the race. In those days, being fired was a terrible stigma and he expected a curt refusal from the colonel, who instead said: "You were fired, were you? That is cause for celebration!"

The only vacancy was for relief ranger – a job that no one else wanted. "But I grabbed it with



*From the top: Dr Player and his wife, Ann
Dr Player and Al Gore on the latter's visit to South Africa in 1997
Dr Player with Sir Laurens van der Post*

both hands," he says. It was a humble beginning for a man who would go on to be consulted by princes and presidents.

"My first station in 1952 was on Lake St Lucia estuary," Player recalls. "I stayed at the Angler's Hotel, which cost me 18 pounds a month. I was earning 20; this left me with very little money. There was no vehicle, but I had a clinker-built wooden boat with an old – and I mean old! – five-horsepower Evinrude motor. This was the only transport I had besides a canoe and a surfboard.

"My duties were to ferry people across the estuary in a pont, to spray for malaria, stop illegal crayfishing and mussel-gathering, and patrol the coast. The boat would take me to the top of the lake and then I would walk back – it took me a day. If I arrested someone, I had to walk them to the town of Mtubatuba (18 kilometres from St Lucia) and then hope to get a lift back.

"The worst part was catching bait for the fishermen – that meant wading up to the waist, dragging nets to catch prawns. People were very ungrateful," he adds.

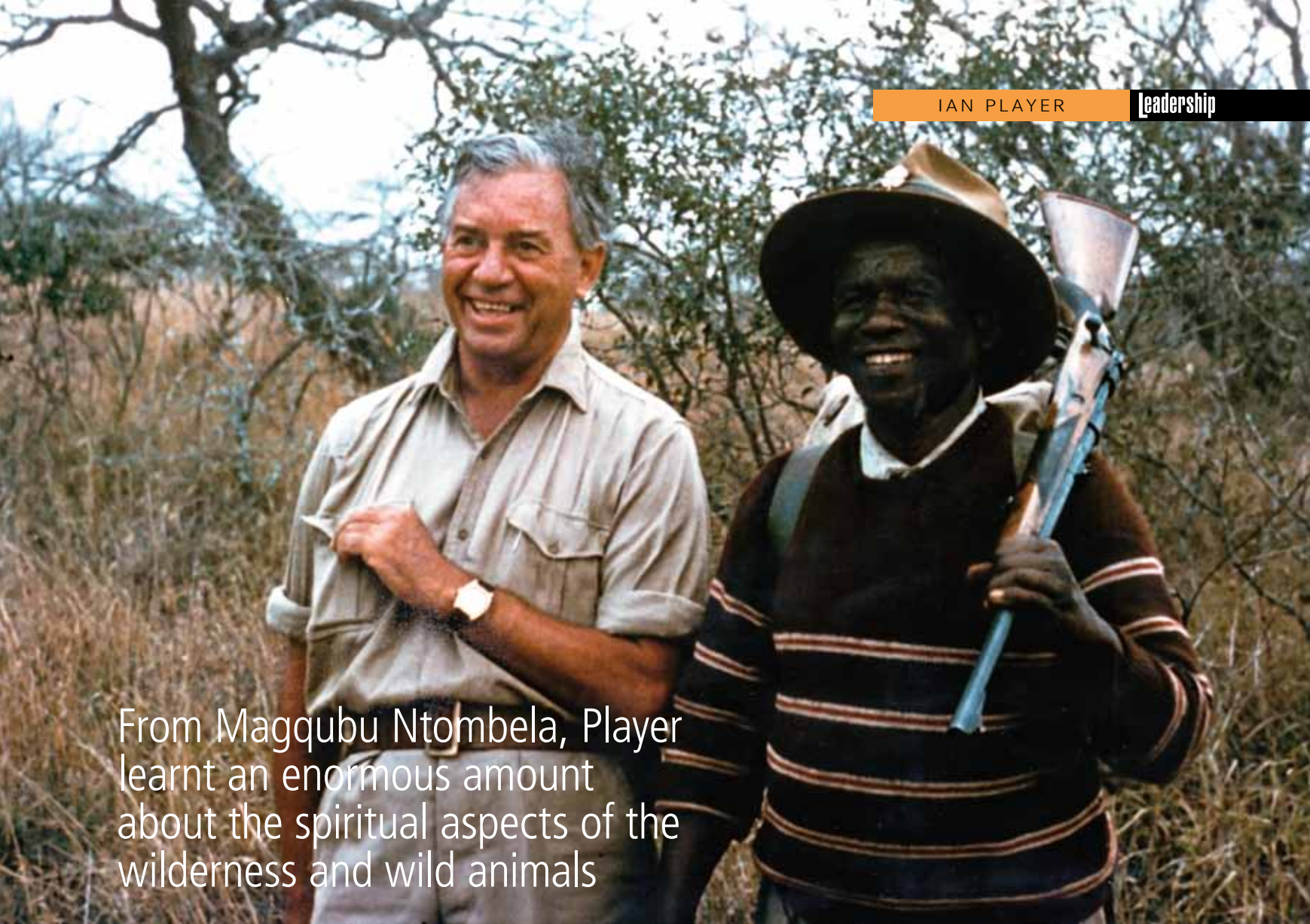
At that time, the so-called game reserves had very little game, and conservation held little meaning. Many animal species had been declared extinct or nearly extinct and very few people cared. To most, wild animals were a nuisance, and the wilderness only there to be exploited.

"The Parks Board was extremely unpopular. The amaTonga people hunted hippo as their traditional prey: they would wait up a tree and when the hippo passed underneath, they would drop on it and kill it with axes," Player says. "They did not like being stopped but, despite this, they were very kind to me."

But the antipathy that he experienced in St Lucia was nothing compared to the hostility he got when he was posted to Hluhluwe.

"Nagana (sleeping sickness, transmitted by the tsetse fly) was killing cattle, and farmers believed wild game was transmitting it. Game was an anathema. They shot everything; they would have liked to shoot us, too."

All that stood between the farmers, their champions in government and the animals of the Umfolozi and Hluhluwe parks was the head conservator, Captain HB Potter. Captain Potter was a great diplomat who managed to soothe the outraged farmers and predatory landowners while playing his trump card: the Umfolozi was



From Magqubu Ntombela, Player learnt an enormous amount about the spiritual aspects of the wilderness and wild animals

the only region in the world that still contained southern white rhino.

Declared extinct in the 1890s, a chance discovery found a tiny population in the Umfolozi Basin, leading to the nominal proclamation of the park in 1895. And it was in the Umfolozi that two things happened that would change Player's life forever.

"I was doing an anti-poaching foot patrol in the park and for the first time I saw a white rhino. It made a very deep impression on me. It was on one of those drizzly days that you get in Zululand. Out of the bush came these two rhinos – huge, really primordial, antediluvian, like the ancient dinosaurs. I had an intuitive flash that my life would always be associated with these creatures," he remembers.

At the same time, colleague Jim Feeley lent Player a book by American conservator Reuben Edwin Trippensee, containing the fundamentals

of the wilderness concept. "I had existed for three years in isolated places, had imbibed substantially the wilderness concept, and when I saw the written words in the book I knew it was important for us to have wilderness areas. Those of us who were rangers understood the value of parks because we walked there. The public only came as visitors in cars. There was no spiritual attachment if you were a visitor – but if you walked there, you would understand the wilderness."

In 1957, Player set up the Wilderness Leadership School by taking small groups of school boys into the wilderness – the first group being from his own alma mater. He persuaded the Parks Board to set aside a special area for this, and in March 1959 the first official trail went through the bush with himself and fellow ranger, Magqubu Ntombela.

It was the beginning of a 50-year friendship and partnership between the two men, who had

first met in 1952. From Ntombela, Player learnt an enormous amount about the spiritual aspects of the wilderness and wild animals.

"I realised at that time that parks would face a difficult future. Rising populations, the advent of mass tourism, 'advanced' civilisation – these would destroy the parks. I took a lot of time to contemplate these things, and it seemed the only way to save the wilderness was to create an opportunity for people to experience it," he says.

Player had already read Sir Laurens van der Post's book, *Venture to the Interior*, and was profoundly impressed with the link it postulated between the wilderness and the human soul.

"I see wilderness as the font of the spiritual experience, the new temple. There is not a religion that was not born in the wilderness," he says.

“When I was a boy at St John’s College in Johannesburg, at Easter time we had to sit alone in the chapel with only one candle burning; it was a profound experience. So on the wilderness trails, we require people to do a night watch: you take turns to sit alone by the campfire during the night. That is the one experience that most people say is most important; it changes them.

“I left the Natal Parks Board in 1974 to devote all my time to the Wilderness Leadership School and the initiatives that grew out of it, one being the Save St Lucia campaign. That actually started in 1975,” Player notes.

A lasting legacy from his time as chief warden of the Umfolozi Game Reserve was the legendary Operation Rhino – an initiative that forever changed modern ideas of conservation.

“By 1952, a few counts of white rhino had been done on foot, but they were unreliable. In 1953, Colonel Vincent instructed me to do an aerial count. By then we knew *nagana* was not carried by game, but by tsetse flies, which we killed by spraying DDT from crop sprayers. We persuaded one of the pilots to take us up. The

tremendous responsibility and kept me awake at night,” he admits.

“In 1960, we found the numbers had risen to over 600, so I went to Colonel Vincent and told him we needed to capture and transport white rhino to their former habitats.”

“But there was resistance from the Board,” Player continues. “They rightly argued that the white rhino was the ace in the pack. If you took the white rhino out of the Umfolozi, it was a huge risk to the park. But we saw what was happening in the rest of Africa: the colonial regimes had collapsed and the first thing to suffer was the wildlife.

“In 1961, I went to Uganda to learn the basics of translocation and we began experimenting with tranquiliser drugs for animals. It was extremely dangerous and difficult for both the men and the animals. But the idea was to restock our own parks and then begin selling rhinos to accredited zoos.

“I am grateful that I had the opportunity to be involved in one of the most successful operations in conservation, but the emphasis on what is happening nowadays with rhino poaching

trails, the Wilderness Leadership School and the Wilderness Foundations that led to the World Wilderness Congress that started in Johannesburg in 1977. This has become the longest running environmental congress in the world, despite a very bad beginning,” Player notes.

“In the 1970s, people were reluctant to come to South Africa and I was derided because I wanted to include everyone – artists and poets and scientists and hunters – because they are all part of the environment. I succeeded because of the support of Piet Koornhof, and he was only supportive because I had taken him and his family out on a trail. So everything has grown out of the Wilderness Leadership School and the leadership trails.

“If anything good has come out of the current slaughter of the rhino, it is that it seems to have awakened a consciousness in people who have previously been divided. People who would not normally show an interest have become very vocal, and there is no doubt in my mind that nowadays it is the women who have stepped to the forefront of conservation. Any married man involved in front-line conservation owes an enormous debt of thanks to his wife!” he says.

“I don’t know how much time I have left, but it has always been a struggle. I think of my friendship with men like Nick Steele, Hugh Dent and especially Magqubu Ntombela – without them we could never have achieved what we did.”

The list of achievements left behind by this remarkable man and his colleagues in wildlife conservation in Africa would fill a volume. Player never set out to be popular; he set out to do what was right. Conservation today consists of people trained by his methods, schooled in his innovations, who understand his philosophy and are inspired by his vision.

To step back from the mundane world and gain some perspective, leave your comfort zone and take a walk in real wilderness. Breathe in air scented with vegetation, feel the dust of Africa, stand under a vast soaring cathedral of a great tree, feel the heat of our primeval sun or hear the faraway crash of an animal in the undergrowth.

That is Dr Ian Player’s monument. You can make it yours as well. ▲

Niki Moore

“We face a pretty heavy die-off. This is inevitable because the Earth is a living organism and will reject us when we threaten it.”

pilots knew the park well and knew where the rhinos were,” says Player. “We counted them; there were 437. That was the total population in October 1953.

“When I became the senior ranger in 1958, I noticed white rhino were increasing. This worried me. There were no fences in those days – rural people were moving onto the borders of the parks, right on the edge of the game reserve. I was afraid that one diseased cow with anthrax would be all that was needed to wipe out the rhinos.

“Here I was, in charge of a park with one of the world’s most endangered species. It was a

overlooks what is even more critically important – the environment is now a crucial political issue. I find it terrifying; we all depend on the environment and this is under tremendous threat,” he says.

“No one wants to talk about the problem of overpopulation. We are now seven billion and rising. Unless the world gets to grips with overpopulation, the consequences will be severe. We face a pretty heavy die-off. This is inevitable because the Earth is a living organism and will reject us when we threaten it.

“If I am remembered for anything, I would like to be remembered for the wilderness

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The Greybeard of African Adventure

Kingsley Holgate leads another bold expedition in support of malaria prevention – this time along Africa's Great Rift Valley



Kingsley Holgate has completed a Cape to Cairo crossing of Africa in open boats; circumnavigated Lake Turkana; sailed the Makgadikgadi Salt Pans in land yachts; and travelled on foot, bicycle, bullock cart, dugout canoe and Land Rover across the globe. These accomplishments alone are enough to make any travel fundi green with envy.

But what makes his travels even more remarkable than those of the great explorers such as David Livingstone, Henry Stanley and Frederick Selous, who ticked these off their list long before him? Well, the simple answer is that Kingsley is a dedicated ambassador for the United Against Malaria (UAM) campaign and has spent the last several years promoting awareness around the disease and raising funds to buy and personally distribute life-saving nets across the African continent.



“These are South Africans getting together to solve an African problem”

A child dies every minute of malaria in Africa. The disease threatens half the world’s population and claims 655 000 lives each year – 90% of those on the African continent. The truth is, however, that malaria can be prevented effectively and treated fairly easily.

“After countless African journeys, myself and my family – having all contracted malaria on numerous occasions – believed that taking up the fight against Africa’s biggest killer was a great way to give something back to Mama Afrika,” said Kingsley.

Already, with the help of education pioneered by humanitarians such as Kingsley, malaria infection has been reduced by 38% in the last decade alone.

Over and above the high death toll the disease racks up in Africa, malaria stunts productivity and economic growth, and further contributes to the cycle of poverty in Africa. Putting an end to malaria would significantly reduce poverty and unlock Africa’s true potential to thrive as a developing continent.

“Billions of US dollars are lost to productivity because of malaria. It’s so much a part of the

cycle of poverty; by eradicating the disease, we’ll grow opportunities for millions of people who would’ve had little or no chance at all,” said Kingsley.

The ‘Greybeard of African Adventure’ recently took some time out from his latest African expedition in support of malaria prevention and education, to visit South Africa on World Malaria Day (25 April). Kingsley and his team are currently involved in their latest year-long Great African Rift Valley Expedition, which started in October last year and which will traverse the Valley’s most northern point of Djibouti on the Horn of Africa through Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Malawi to its most southern point near Gorongosa in Mozambique.

With a similar formula as Kingsley’s previous missions – using adventure to improve and save lives – the expedition is a humanitarian journey focused on malaria prevention initiatives as well as the distribution of spectacles to poor-sighted people in remote areas, and water filters to areas where contamination is a serious problem.

“On my latest Great Africa Rift Valley Expedition, we have been able to do great humanitarian work, this time, under the banner of UAM. It’s a year-long expedition that will be completed in several chapters, following the greatest scar in the Earth’s crust, all the way from Djibouti down to Mozambique,” he said.

From the very first African Rainbow Expedition that set off back in June 2005 until his current expedition, Kingsley and his dedicated team have carried a Scroll of Peace and Goodwill to be signed and messaged by ambassadors, presidents, school children, health authorities, village elders, administrators and volunteers as a declaration of support for the project. It is clear from the comments on the scroll that their work is greatly appreciated and they have touched deeply the hearts of those with whom they have made contact.

Kingsley’s humanitarian missions are made possible only with the help of corporate and individual donors, equipment sponsors, sponsor partners and media partners.

“We could never do expeditions like the Great Africa Rift Valley from start to finish without

the help of generous sponsors. It takes a lot of money, vehicles, tyres, fuel, supplies and, of course the nets to pull these expeditions off. An expedition like the one we're on can cost around five or six million rand and I'm really proud of the number of South African corporates who have got behind us. These are South Africans getting together to solve an African problem," he said.

So how can the ordinary citizen support this cause, short of hopping on a dhow and setting sail for a remote African location with thousands of malaria nets on board?

Well, the answer is quite simple: members of the public pledge their allegiance and play their part in the fight against malaria by purchasing a colourful UAM bracelet available at all Cape Union Mart stores.

On Kingsley's earlier expeditions, expedition volunteers who travelled from one African community to the next tied around their wrists blue strips cut from the material used to make malaria nets and those of the people they helped, as a symbol of belonging to a common cause.

Now, as both a means of formalising the concept as well as opening the doors to public participation and fund raising, in 2010 the UAM joined forces with Relate – a South African non-governmental organisation that creates and sells beaded 'cause bracelets' – and developed a signature UAM supporters' bracelet that has since become a global symbol for the fight against malaria.

"It's not easy for the person on the street to just go into some remote African country and provide their help to fight malaria on their own accord. But to spend just R30 on a vibey, colourful bracelet is a simple way for the ordinary citizen to become part of the winning team to fight malaria," said Kingsley.

An amount of R8 from the sale of each bracelet is donated to the prevention efforts of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria. With the sale of 10 bracelets, enough money is raised to buy a net that will protect one child for up to five years.

To date, approximately R3.5-million has been raised through the sale of these bracelets and around 30 000 mosquito nets have been

purchased. This means that up to 100 000 children now sleep at night without the worry of contracting malaria.

Kingsley Holgate-led expeditions will continue to distribute life-saving nets to pregnant mothers and mothers with children under the age of five years, and the team will return to communities where they have previously distributed nets and where replacements are needed. The overall aim of his expeditions is to ensure a maximum reduction in malaria deaths by 2015 as a major step toward ultimately eradicating the disease in its entirety.

"I never use the word 'complete' in the same sentence as 'adventure'. I haven't, for instance, been to every part of Table Mountain. But to embrace Mama Afrika, to doff your cap at her and to have been able to do humanitarian work in every single one of her countries, is an unbelievable privilege," said Kingsley.

Over and above beating malaria, the UAM bracelets are helping to curb poverty in southern Africa. Through the production of these bracelets, skills are developed, employment is created and income is generated for the 250



"I believed that taking up the fight against Africa's biggest killer was a great way to give something back to Mama Afrika"



people who make each one by hand, and each supports up to another five people.

Relate's beaders, who operate out of community centres in local townships, are able to earn enough money through making these bracelets, to provide food and shelter for themselves and their family. The beaders include elderly people with orphaned grandchildren in their care (often these children's parents died from HIV/Aids-related illnesses), unemployed young adults, the mentally and physically challenged, and refugees seeking asylum in South Africa.

"But what makes the Cape Union Mart sponsorship so special is that as we're talking right now, hundreds of women in Khayelitsha and other townships are beading UAM bracelets. Through providing them with work, we're helping to solve the South African problem of unemployment. The UAM bracelet project has given many South Africans a job opportunity and they are doing something they can feel good about," said Kingsley.

"Last year, we presented the Global Fund with \$250 000 from the sale of these bracelets to fight malaria in Africa. For the first time, it wasn't Africa with its hands out to the West saying, 'Give me money to fight one of our problems' – it was Africans saying 'Let's make a difference and try to solve the problem ourselves'."

Everyone would agree that for Kingsley, it must be one of the most rewarding feelings to traverse the African continent – a place that he loves to explore and holds very close to his heart – while knowing he is saving the lives of people who may not have had a real chance at life before he arrived.

But his work is challenging, tiring and sometimes dangerous. What drives him to do what he does?

"I was sitting with a friend of mine on the beach at Cape Agulhas the other day and he asked me, 'How come you're so lucky to get to do all these adventures, and I don't?' I fetched seven pebbles from the beach and said, 'Don, imagine that each one of these pebbles is worth 10 summers – that's 70 years. That's said to be the average human lifespan.'

"Then I asked, 'How old are you, Don?' He replied, 'Fifty.'

"I took five pebbles and threw them away. Then I said, 'You see that sixth pebble? Well, it's no guarantee as you get older,' and threw that one away, too.

"I then picked up the remaining pebble and said, 'Don, put this in your pocket. It's going to be a bloody nuisance, like a worry bead, but it will constantly remind you to utilise the time you've been given with passion and energy, doing what you really want to do.'" ▲

Simon Capstick-Dale

UAM bracelets are available from all Cape Union Mart and Old Khaki stores at R30 each.

Visit www.kingsleyholgate.net for updates.



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Source: *BTM Consult ApS – A part of Navigant Consulting – World Market Update 2010

Deep and meaningful

Hanli Prinsloo: Record-breaking freediver and champion of our oceans

Most people have not heard of the sport of freediving, nor would it make much sense to them. To push one's body to the limits of its capacity (and sometimes beyond) for the sake of a sport where in essence you are competing with yourself – well, to many this would seem silly. Silly, like trying to land a spacecraft on the moon or run a mile in under four minutes. For people such as Hanli Prinsloo, it is at the limits of her capabilities that she feels most alive.

She holds all the African records for the various disciplines involved with freediving and is challenging hard in order to gain the world records. “Those are mine,” she tells with me no irony or ego. The world record for freediving with flippers and a lungful of air is 62 metres – Prinsloo has already managed 56m. This is equivalent to swimming to the depth of a 20-storey building.

Getting down there is one thing, but the real danger lies in getting back. Panic is the body's natural response. Prinsloo uses yoga and believes strongly in the mammalian diving reflex (see sidebar overleaf) – which is just as well, since she is able to hold her breath for around six minutes.

Within minutes of meeting her, I realised that Hanli Prinsloo is different to most people.

She and her sister were raised on a farm near Witbank, with her father breeding horses for show jumping and dressage – her father was also a ‘horse whisperer’ (they do exist) who was regularly consulted regarding troublesome horses in the area.

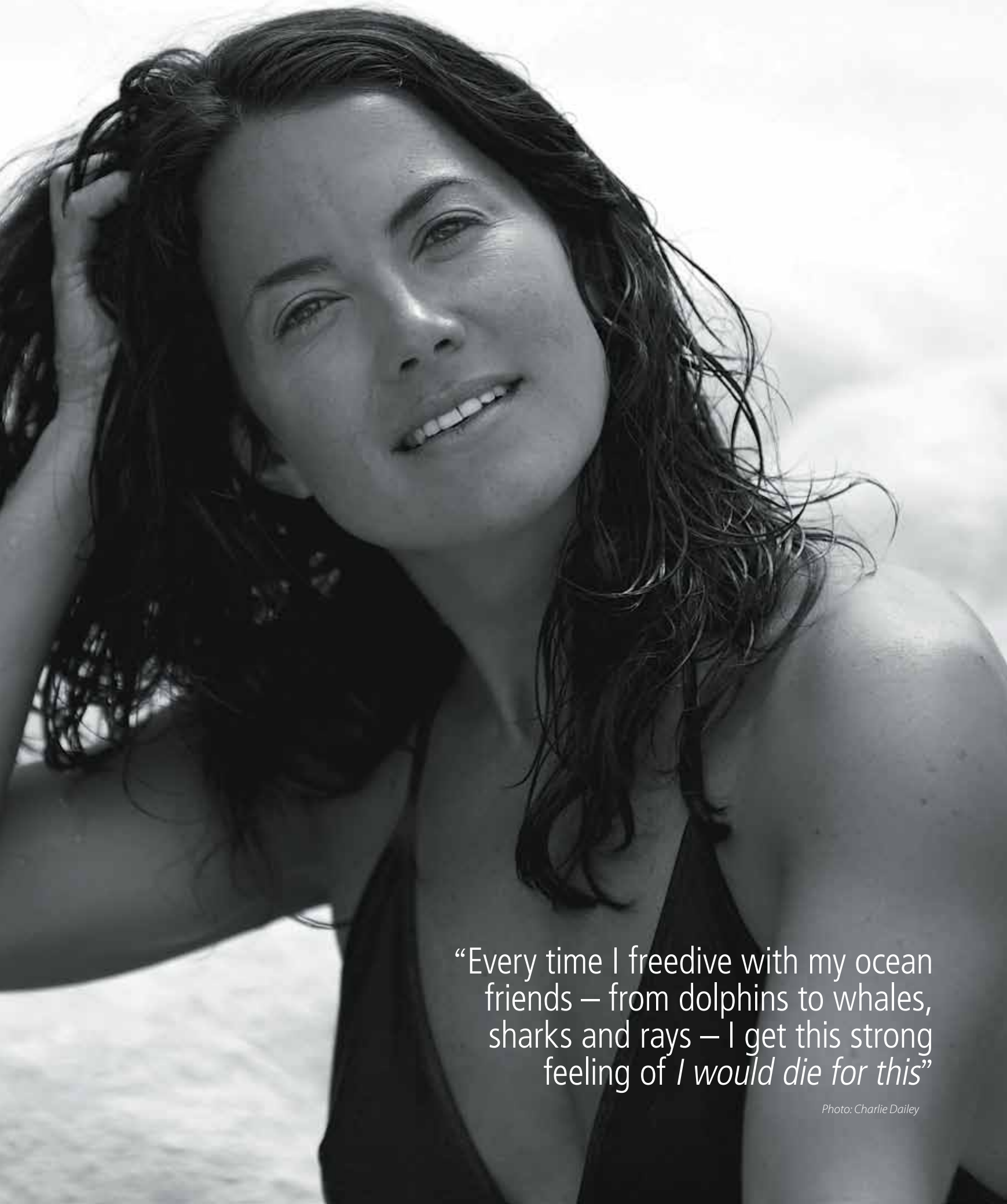
Growing up on a farm made Prinsloo attuned to the rhythms of nature, so much so that she sometimes finds the quaint fishing village of Kalk Bay – where she now resides – ‘hectic’. By all accounts, she lived a robustly outdoor life growing up, preparing her well for the adventures to come.

Upon completing school, she promptly packed her bags for Sweden where she chose to write Matric in Swedish. “I wanted to be challenged in a new environment where I am out of my comfort zone.” This seems to be a common theme in Prinsloo's life, which she eloquently verbalises as “growth through discomfort”.

Completing her Swedish schooling while learning the language at the same time, she chose a Performing Arts degree and soon found herself acting on Swedish stage and television productions. It was during this period that a colleague mentioned he was going freediving and Prinsloo asked to try it out.

They rowed to the middle of a lake and jumped in with only the most basic equipment. This opened up an entirely new world for Prinsloo





“Every time I freedive with my ocean friends – from dolphins to whales, sharks and rays – I get this strong feeling of *I would die for this*”

Photo: Charlie Dailey



Behind the competitive facade lurks a deeply compassionate soul that wants to change the world—and Prinsloo may just pull it off

and she had found her calling. She has been freediving for 13 years now and feels she still has a great deal to learn and accomplish.

In 2004, she returned to South Africa for a Swedish television station to cover the changes the country had gone through since becoming a democracy 10 years earlier. She realised that South Africa was her home, and after seven years in Sweden she returned.

Prinsloo has competed and won events all around the globe. Something ruptured in her throat while she was attempting to break the world record in the Red Sea in Egypt. Undeterred and fully recovered, she regards this as something from which to learn and grow.

If Hanli Prinsloo were simply a phenomenal freediver, this story would end here; however, this is really where the story begins for this incredible individual.

She uses her accomplishments in freediving as a platform for the work she finds most meaningful, which is as an activist and advocate for the oceans and the creatures that live therein. Behind the competitive facade lurks a deeply compassionate soul that wants to change the world – and she may just pull it off.

Prinsloo has freedived with some of the largest and most exotic creatures that live in our oceans. She has dived with whale sharks, manta rays, blue whales, sperm whales, giant turtles, dugongs etc. She has a spiritual bond with these animals and uses her freediving talents to interact comfortably with them in their environment. She has had any number of unique interactions that have been well documented. This leads me to another interesting aspect about her.

Although her media and drama training has resulted in her becoming a consummate marketing professional who is able to take a fringe sport such as freediving and turn it into something that is part of our mainstream discourse, Prinsloo is nowhere near being a

‘sellout’. If she were, she would have jumped at the many offers she has had from the likes of National Geographic and other ‘nature’ channels that want to document her incredible life. She will not do it because of what she calls their “double jeopardy” style of journalism, where nature is portrayed as harsh and forbidding. She says this reinforces the stereotype of ‘Man vs Beast’, which has led to humans regarding fauna and flora as commodities.

Prinsloo has decided to tell her story in her own way, which is what makes her so powerful. She has chosen to portray the beauty and compassion of the oceans’ exotic creatures so that we may love them the way she does, and really want to conserve them as opposed to believing

The mammalian diving reflex is a reflex in mammals which optimises respiration to allow staying underwater for extended periods of time. It is exhibited strongly in aquatic mammals (seals, otters, dolphins etc.), but exists in a weaker version in other mammals including humans. Diving birds such as penguins have a similar diving reflex. Every animal’s diving reflex is triggered specifically by cold water contacting the face – water that is warmer than 21°C does not cause the reflex, and neither does submersion of body parts other than the face. Furthermore, the reflex is always exhibited more dramatically – and thus can grant longer survival – in young individuals.



Photo: Jean-Marie Ghislain

so in some abstract sense. She is currently working on a book of unique ocean encounters with Belgian photographer Jean-Marie Ghislain which, from some of the pictures she showed me, promises to be stunning.

To further inculcate a love for the oceans in society, Prinsloo conducts regular freediving courses where the likes of you and I can learn the techniques in order to conquer our own fears and barriers.

By interacting with the abundant oceans, she believes people grow to love them and then are naturally and completely inclined to their conservation. This is conservation in the real sense, since these individuals become custodians of the ocean and in turn educate others. She has taken this a step further by running freediving courses for the workers tasked with cleaning up the debris and detritus that litter the shores of the Cape Peninsula. Visionary interventions such as this are the stuff that changes behaviour and leads to positive and lasting progress.

Prinsloo has teamed up with a similarly proactive and creative group of people to form the I Am Water Trust, which “fosters ocean conservation

through human experience”. The trust is aimed primarily at creating opportunities for previously disadvantaged South Africans to experience our ocean wildernesses.

Some friends of mine happened to do a freedive course with her a few months ago and have spoken of it as a transformative experience.

Prinsloo is also in high demand as a motivational speaker and corporate team-builder. She runs regular yoga classes for the staff and customers of one of her main sponsors. She has mastered the art of self-promotion and managing the media but, unlike most people who do this for egotistical reasons, she has always sought the limelight in order to advocate her great love – the well-being of our oceans.

Through challenging herself and pushing her limits, she encourages us to do the same. It is through her example that she leads, and she does it without pride or bombast, but with grace and poise.

Here we have an exceptional athlete breaking records not for her own glory, but for a higher purpose. Prinsloo has the wisdom to understand that her success will give her a platform and the humility to know how to manage it. She has

the determination to push her body to its limits while understanding that one can conquer through yielding as much as through strength.

She has no resentment for those who view the oceans as some kind of floating supermarket or landfill, but rather a determination to help them change.

Some people choose to lead with the head and others with the heart; Prinsloo seems able to master both. She makes us want to do things better and, to coin a cliché, ‘be the change you want to see’. She does not seek fame for itself, but rather as a tool to get her message across.

At this point, it is probably best to conclude with Prinsloo’s own words, from which one may derive the essence of what lies beneath: “Every time I freedive with my ocean friends – from dolphins to whales, sharks and rays – I get this strong feeling of ‘I would die for this’. Luckily this is not yet the choice I’m faced with, which is why I have made an even stronger decision: I will live for this! For seeing our oceans appreciated, protected, experienced and treasured. I am Water.” ▲

George Joubert

Going...going... almost gone!

Dissecting the nature of
the rhino poaching problem

As the Asian middle class is growing and becoming wealthier, the demand for rhino horn is skyrocketing. And so is poaching. Over the first four months of this year, 1.64 South African rhinos have died at the hands of poachers every single day – up from 0.2 in 2008. If this trend is not stopped in its tracks, we risk losing our rhinos in mere decades from now.

There he was, in all his might and glory. Standing on a sandy patch seamed off by low shrubbery, the animal silently gazed over the Karoo veld. His size was without a doubt impressive and intimidating, yet there was something intensely vulnerable about him.

This was August 2007. Back then, only a handful of South Africans realised how special this horned creature was: he was the first of his kind to be introduced in the Western Cape after hunters shot the last rhino some 250 years ago. To most, however, the animal with its double horn and gentle eyes was nothing but a Kodak moment living at Aquila Private Game Reserve.

This scenario changed dramatically in the third week of August 2011, when a gang of panga-clad poachers invaded the reserve's plains. Hired – directly or indirectly – by individuals seeking to improve their luck, status, bank account or sexual performance, the men killed one rhino on the spot by hacking off most of its face. A second animal got away pretty much unharmed. The giant from the sandy patch was left behind, profusely bleeding from a massive gash on its forehead.

The images of the mutilated rhino, better known as Absa, were soon imprinted on everyone's memory. South Africans cried foul, even more so when the rhino succumbed to his injuries five days after the attack.

To legalise or not to legalise?

Some claim that legalising the trade in rhino horn could be part of the solution. Trendler does not agree: "We can't even control the number of rhino hunting permits that are issued, so how can we control the trade? Besides that, we do not know how much horn we have and how large the stockpiles are. We do not know how large the demand is. Legalising the trade could further stimulate that demand – so no, it is not a viable option to save the rhino."

Absa, in terms of rhino poaching in South Africa, forms the tip of the iceberg.

In 2011, 448 animals suffered the similar gruesome fate in order to satisfy the needs of wealthy people living in faraway lands – a staggering rate of 1.2 illegal deaths every 24 hours. This is a dramatic increase from previous years. In 2010, 333 rhinos were poached (0.9 per day) and 2009 and 2008 respectively saw 122 (0.3 per day) and 83 (0.2 per day) incidents. In other words: the rise of rhino poaching in South Africa between 2008 and 2011 amounts to some 400%.

Unfortunately, there is not light at the end of the tunnel. The death toll among our rhino population in the 128 days between 1 January and 7 May this year stands at 210, bringing the daily incidence rate for this year to 1.64. It is an increase of some 30% compared to 2011.

“At this rate, we could lose some 600 rhinos this year alone,” says Dr Morné du Plessis, chief executive officer of the World Wildlife Fund South Africa.

What does this say about the future of our rhinos? A simple calculation, based on a daily number of 1.64 incidents and a South African rhino population of some 21 000 animals (19 000 white and some 2 000 black), reveals that our last rhino could be shot in 35 years from now.

This verdict comes close to Karen Trendler’s predictions. Earlier this year, Trendler, who is one of South Africa’s top rhino experts, warned that the Rainbow Nation could lose all its rhinos by the year 2050 – a figure various media outlets misquoted as 2015.

When asked about these statements, she said that she hated to sound alarmist, and even to consider that losing our rhino is a possibility: “Fact of the matter is that the situation is dire and that we could lose them – soon.”

Having worked with rhinos for the past 25 years, Trendler is one of the driving forces behind the Rhino Orphan Response Project. The initiative was developed with the Endangered Wildlife Trust and aims to care for and rehabilitate orphaned and often injured rhino calves.

Many rhino babies have been left to their own devices after their mothers had been shot. “Usually they suckle for 18 months and are under their mother’s care for three years,” Trendler noted.

Depending how you look at the situation, the predicted 35 to 40 years could be classified as



According to Dr Morné du Plessis, CEO of the World Wildlife Fund SA, we could lose some 600 rhinos this year alone, at the current poaching rate



Photo: Mark Wessels

*Absa at Aquila Private Game Reserve
She died five days after being mutilated by poachers for her horn*

optimistic, as the calculation does not take into consideration the rhinos that will be killed by hunters with permits (129 licences were issued in 2010 and 143 in 2011), nor does it include a possible increase in poaching.

If the illegal killing of rhino grows by 30% to 100% on a year-on-year basis, which it has done for the past five years, South Africa’s Big Five could lose a family member much sooner than 2050.

“We also need to keep in mind that there are countless unknown variables that could further fuel the problem. We do not know what the precise demand is for rhino horn;

who wants the substance; if the demand will grow and, if so, by how much and why,” Trendler noted.

“Additionally, we have too little information on the poaching syndicates; who runs them and from where; who is involved, and how these syndicates operate. All these variables can change quickly – fuelling rhino poaching.”

Without denying the severity of the situation, Dr Du Plessis noted the calculation is slightly incomplete. “It does not take into account the fact that rhinos reproduce,” he said. “That said, if poaching increases like it has done over the past years, it will bite us.”



Thabo & Ntombo, two orphaned rhinos at Thula Thula. Thabo was shot a month ago by poachers, but is recovering. They have 24-hour security.

While rhinos are the ones that pay the full price for the Asian demand for their horns, the situation is not a mere environmental problem. “It affects us all. Rhino poaching is a highly organised crime, involving drugs, weapons and other crimes,” Trendler explained. “And it is not just the poachers and Eastern clients who are to blame. Rhino poaching involves many, many South Africans – within the game, tourism and conservation industries and the public sector and even SANParks [South African National Parks].”

In February this year, four Kruger National Park officials – a SANParks employee, a member of the Protection Services Unit and two traffic cops – were arrested after two dead, dehorned

rhinos were discovered in the Pretoriuskop section of the park.

“Of course, these are some bad eggs. But there are also many, many incredible people in the government and SANParks who are working tirelessly to fight poaching under very difficult conditions,” Trendler added with determination. “We have to remember that.”

One of the things people should realise is that poaching is not confined to rhino, nor to South Africa alone. “The illegal wildlife and animal-part trade in the whole of Africa is growing rapidly, and comprises elephant tusks, reptiles, insects, zebra skins and lion bones,” stressed Trendler, who is better known as Mama Rhino.

Do your bit

The public is urged to report incidents of rhino poaching or tip-offs that could lead to arrests and prevention of illegal killings, to 0800 205 005.

Donate to credible anti-poaching initiatives. Be beware: Not all fund raisers are based on good intentions. Pelham Jones, chairperson of the Private Rhino Owners Association, was quoted by the media saying that only 15% of the 272 fund-raising organisations linked to rhino conservation can be rated as credible. Among the good ones are Saving Private Rhino (<http://savingprivaterhino.org>), which aims to train anti-poaching units; and Kate Trendler’s Rhino Response Project (<http://rhino-response-strategy.blogspot.com>).



Photo: Mark Wessels

A rhino memorial alongside the highway in Bothasig, Cape Town. The crosses commemorate the number of rhinos killed since the beginning of this year.

Although no longer in the global spotlights, African elephants are facing a heartbreaking reality. According to the Born Free Foundation, a United States-based environmental conservation organisation, some 36 000 African elephants – 98 per day or four an hour – were poached for their ivory in 2009.

“Particularly elephant populations in West and Central Africa are targeted,” the organisation stated on its website. “In 2004, there were thought to be around 4 000 elephants in Chad’s

Zakouma National Park; today they number less than 1 000. Similarly, Central African Republic is estimated to be losing around 500 elephants a year from poaching. For some elephant populations, it is already too late – Senegal has just two elephants remaining.”

The South African government is aware of the rhino poaching problem and has stepped up the fight against the phenomenon. According to official statistics, 128 arrests have been made when *Leadership* magazine went to print.

In addition, the authorities plan to deploy 150 new game rangers in the Kruger National Park, which bears the brunt of the poaching problem.

“The first group of 75 are currently undergoing a six-week paramilitary training course, and the others will follow later,” Water and Environmental Affairs Minister Edna Molewa said in a media statement issued in the first week of April.

Last but not least, South Africa has asked the Vietnamese authorities for help. “We are consulting at the diplomatic level ... to refuse all applications for white rhinoceros hunting by hunters who reside in Vietnam,” Molewa added.

While rhino horn is a much-used substance in China, it is gaining rapid popularity in Vietnam where the last Java rhino was shot two years ago.

According to Dr Du Plessis, it is in particular the new uses of rhino horn in Vietnam that are fuelling poaching. “The real problem is that Rhino horn is used for things it has never been used for before, especially in Vietnam. Here, it is marketed as a cure for cancer and a trend remedy to treat hangovers. These and other new uses have largely driven and are further driving the spike in Rhino poaching.” ▲

Miriam Mannak

Rhino horn facts

- In 2010, supermodel Elle MacPherson was subjected to heavy criticism after admitting, during an interview over *Twitter*, that she occasionally ingests powdered rhino horn. “It works for me,” she told *Sunday Times* journalist Mark Edmonds, adding it tastes like crushed bone and fungus.
- While rhino horn is made of keratin, the main component of hair, it cannot be compared to a clump of modified hair. A 2006 study by the Ohio University in the US suggests that the structure of a rhino horn “is comparable to horses’ hooves, turtle beaks and cockatoo bills.” The scientists further revealed that rhino horns are not like the horns of other animals such as deer, which have horns made of keratin on the outside and a bony core. “Rhino horn does not have bony core, but a centre of mineral deposits including calcium.”
- It is a misconception that factories producing Chinese traditional medicines use rhino horn as an ingredient. This was outlawed in the early 1990s. “However, rhino horn is still mixed in medication at practitioner level,” Dr Morné du Plessis added.

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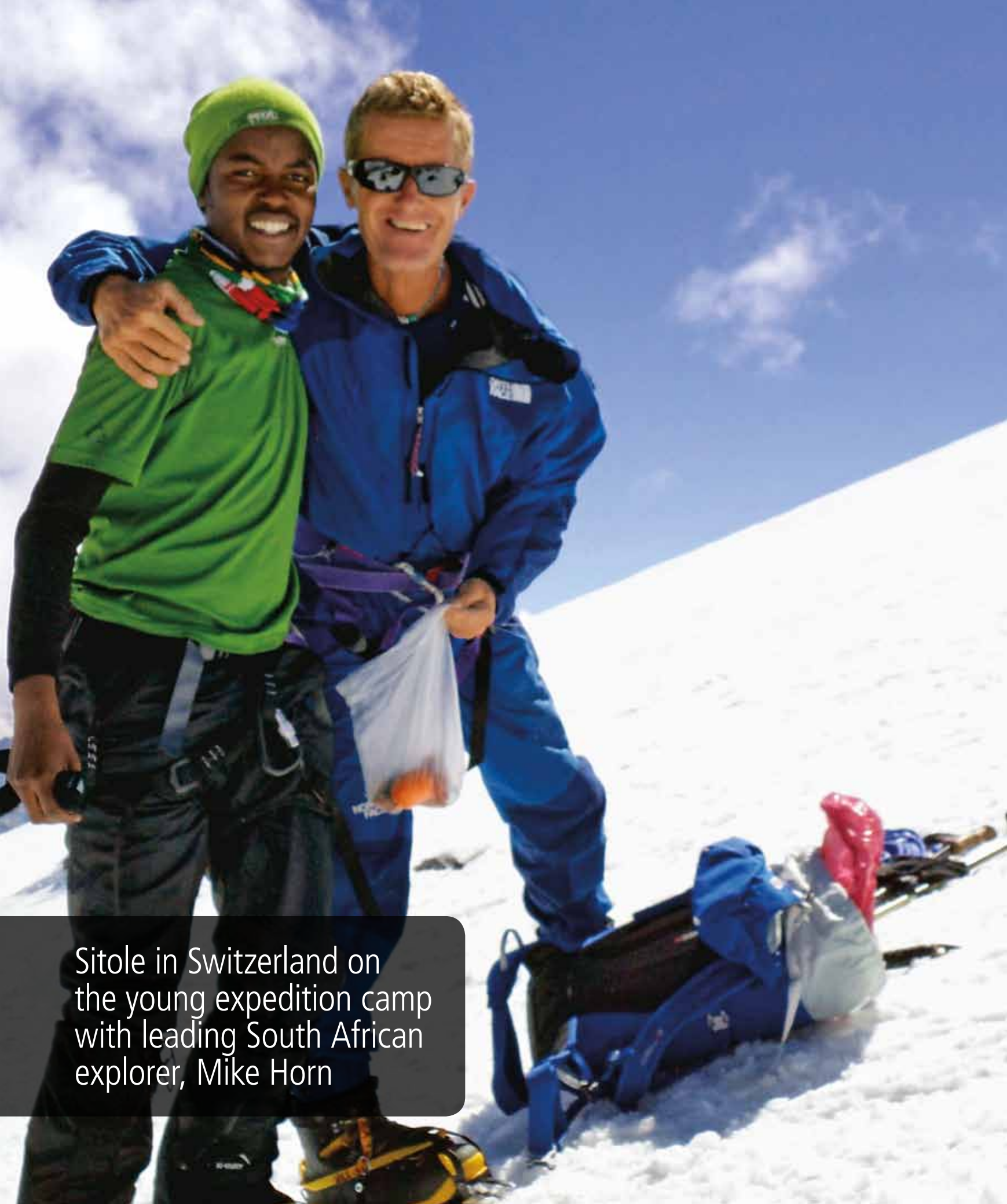
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Sitole in Switzerland on the young expedition camp with leading South African explorer, Mike Horn

Making a molehill out of a mountain

Monde Sitole is on a quest to conquer the Seven Summits and both Poles

Leading extreme mountaineer Monde Sitole has the world at his well-travelled feet: at 20 years old, he speaks with the maturity and wisdom that belies his tender age, though he has the credentials to back it up, including the prize of Mount Kilimanjaro.

He is the sort who loves a serious challenge, already setting himself a target of completing the seven great summits in four years, while also skiing to the South and North Pole – just to make it a more fitting endeavour. If he succeeds, he will be the first African to do so, in a vigorous pastime that has been dominated by Europeans who grow up exploring epic snow-capped mountains.

Sitole's upcoming climb at Mount Denali is the highest peak in North America, a colossal elevation of 6 194 metres. Ironically, though, he has been more worried about logistical red tape than the actual climb, using visualisations as an important tool to overcome fear and anxiety.

The well-spoken role model for a new generation of climbers was raised in the rural Eastern Cape, and is a scholar of classic climbing expeditions. He has studied all the great European climbers of old, during the gold age of uncharted exploration, when heady frontiers where there for the taking in romantic expeditions, although they often resulted in tragic outcomes.

Sitole tells *Leadership*: “From a very young age, I was interested in metaphysics, philosophy and psychology. When I first got into exploring, it was from an armchair perspective, reading the great explorers’ books. I have read a lot about the French Alpinists who climbed unassisted with limited fixed lines. They did not do it for ego, but for the essence of climbing. I understand this deeper reverence to a mountain. When I climb, it is not to be the best climber in the world.”

He was selected to attend the young expedition camp run by leading South African explorer

pushing myself through mentally, and have not scratched the surface athletically,” he notes.

Buoyed by the experience at Horn's camp, and eager for fresh meaningful challenges, Sitole decided on the Seven Summits idea, while starting his own non-governmental organisation, Great African Ascents, which focuses on nature conservation and youth development through mountaineering.

“When I returned from the Mike Horn explorer's camp, I decided that I wanted to do the Seven Summits, which is a clichéd thing. So I wanted to extend it to include the South and

“In my travels, I've noticed that we are a lot more mentally tough than other countries, which comes with our rocky history”

Mike Horn, in Switzerland in 2009 – learning important lessons along the way about mind, body and respect for the environment.

“During the assessments, I had the best marks for mettle, but scored the lowest for the physical test. It shows that I've just been

North Pole and an attempt to climb Everest without oxygen,” he says with conviction, adding that “many of the people who climb Everest with oxygen are cheating.

“There are more deserving peaks than Everest, but it gets the most marketing for being



the highest. There are plenty of more dangerous and deserving mountains in the world.”

It takes at least three months to plan each peak of an expedition, and any little logistical error costs Sitole valuable time and money, while red tape is all too apparent in some of the less organised countries that play host to the world greatest natural theatres of extreme climbing.

This is coupled with mountaineering being a niche sport in South Africa – with rugby, cricket and soccer getting the lion’s share of the advertising spend from large South African companies. Overseas climbers can look forward to multiple sponsorships.

Sitole explains, “The hardest part of preparing for the expedition is the logistical work. When I’m actually on the mountain, that is not the tiring work. I’m not like any other person climbing the mountain because I have climbed it many times already in my own mind. To do this, you have to sit with yourself; if you have even a shadow of a doubt, then that’s a big problem! When you’re so fully convinced that you don’t have to convince anyone else, that is when you are fully prepared.

“For me, I’ve always read a lot and been a proponent of challenging your body’s limits and surpassing previously memorised limitations.”

Without a doubt, his ability to outperform experienced seasoned climbers comes from his tremendous mental reservoir that has been tested in critical situations when the difference between life and death is on a knife edge.

Sithole recalls, “Two days before I left for the Elbrus expedition, I got dropped by one of my sponsors. I had to borrow equipment and use gear from my previous Kilimanjaro expedition. Then, six hours before we were to reach the summit, the people I was climbing with wanted to turn back. But I had mentally already made up my mind that morning that I’d finish the peak.

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“It comes across as arrogant to most people, but if you’re in touch with yourself, it’s not an ego thing. I like it when it’s hard because I want to feel like I’m climbing. It’s a nice excitement, and you don’t want to get complacent on mountains.”

In fact, when it comes to mental toughness, Sithole gives an edge to South Africans as a nation. Having climbed with the world’s best, he identifies the ability of South Africans to

some important sponsors are showing interest in the project already.

He goes on to reveal how he has been received by young people yearning for positive influences. “My expeditions try to help invigorate the latent potential within young people who dare to dream big. That has been my mantra: to surpass whatever you think your limits are.

“You realise that nature is not at risk – we are, because we are subservient to nature. We are reliant on nature”

perform under extreme conditions as being a vital characteristic to his success. “In my travels, I’ve noticed that we are a lot more mentally tough than other countries, which comes with our rocky history.”

He is one of the few purists left in the upper echelons of South African sport, with money ruining much of the appeal, as overpaid athletes perform more often for pay cheques than the love of the game. The same can be said for climbing, as even this niche pursuit has been tainted by commercialism as ‘tourists’ try writing themselves into their own little history books.

Sitole reflects, “These days, you get a sugar-coated, hijacked and over-commercialised commodity. In climbing, you must balance the true essence of climbing with sponsors, which has been the learning curve for me.

“A lot of people you see on the covers of international magazines, especially in America, are not really even climbers at all. It does bug you, but everyone within the climbing fraternity knows that they are not real climbers.”

He plans to give back through another of his outreach programmes, Dare2Dream. Its aim is to train youngsters to reach high for their dreams, no matter how big or small. It will use rock climbing to show children that anything is possible, regardless of the physical or emotional hurdles. Now all Sitole needs is the land, and thankfully

“When you give young people an experience, you don’t need to explain anything. Something latent in them gets switched on.

“When kids get taught about alternative energy resources, green topics and saving the environment at school, it is just abstract information. You need to give them a tangible experience. When you get that experience, you realise that nature is not at risk – we are, because we are subservient to nature. We are reliant on nature, whereas nature can reconstruct itself over and over again,” Sitole notes.

“Instead of planting 200 trees in one place and forgetting about it, I give each child a tree – that way there’s a direct connection, and the kid will end up giving it a name and looking after it, which is more sustainable.”

As one would imagine, he has had his fair share of dangerous moments, regularly tackling the world’s hardest peaks that have gobbled up countless explorers over the years.

“When I was in Elbrus, a lady on our rope fell into a crevasse because she had been hallucinating,” he recalls. “When you’re on the mountain, you hallucinate because your brain is getting such a little amount of oxygen. It becomes like a dream state, an altered level of consciousness. A lot of people die when they are descending the mountain. You think, ‘Ah, I’m done’, and then fall into a crevasse.

“When I was coming down the mountain from Elbrus, I was getting tired, but the minute you become sleepy, you die. You sit down and never wake up. That’s when the mental game comes to the fore. This is especially difficult if you’ve been travelling non-stop and the wind is not assisting. When you have to stop and recheck directions, you lose critical body heat and momentum. You need to know when to turn back when Mother Nature gives you warning signs.”

Sitole continues, “Thankfully I’ve never been sick on the mountain. If you’re one with nature, it allows you to elevate in its altitude. Breath control and meditation are also key ingredients to adapting to the altitude.”

Not one to set average goals, he has loftier ambitions after he charges triumphantly to Seven Summits glory, as the ambitious dreamer has his sights set on the elusive 14 peaks challenge – all of which are over 8 000m.

“My real dream is to climb all 14 of the 8 000-metre peaks without the use of oxygen,” says Sitole. “I have called this my ‘Caravan of Dreams’, which is my way of paying homage to one of my greatest inspirations: Wanda Rutkiewicz. Wanda was a Polish climber who had done six of the 14 peaks. She never finished and disappeared at Kanchenjunga, the third highest mountain in the world. She had pure motives for climbing. I’m very inspired by people who climb with pure intent.”

In closing, he shares with *Leadership*: “The great Alpinist Anatoli Boukreev once said, ‘Mountains are not stadiums where I satisfy my ambition to achieve; they are the cathedrals where I practice my religion ... I go to them as humans go to worship. From their lofty summits I view my past, dream of the future and, with an unusual acuity, am allowed to experience the present moment ... my vision cleared, my strength renewed. In the mountains I celebrate creation. On each journey I am reborn.’

“You realise that you are a small particle in the scale of the mountain, which is the actual hero, which can humble you and make big men cry.”

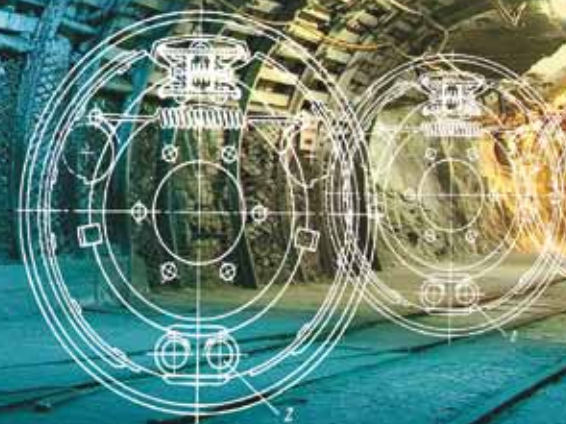
And it is that humility and respect for Mother Nature that encapsulates the essence of Monde Sitole, who is spreading a message of love and respect for the outdoors, when most young adults his age are stuck behind their beloved iPad, wasting away the years of their physical prime. ▲

Gregory Simpson

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Archer is aiming higher

The best-selling author talks about rugby, ambition, bankruptcy, making money and South African men's dress sense

Jeffrey Archer is an incorrigible flirt and a charmer, “the kind of bloke” of whom Ringo Starr reputedly said back in the 1960s, “could bottle your piss and sell it”. No stranger to controversy, Archer is also a stirrer.

“South Africa should never have won that 1995 World Cup,” he is saying. “Andrew Mehrrens shouldn't have missed that final drop goal. Anyone could've kicked that ball over.” He looks at me appreciatively, “even you.” He shakes his head. “But the gods – pink, black, yellow, green, white – decided South Africa needed to win, so they blew that ball off course. And quite right too ...”

Archer, who was in the jubilant Ellis Park stands that day, has returned to South Africa several times since, mostly to watch rugby. This time he is here on an author tour to promote *The Sins of the Father*, his 16th novel and the second volume in *The Clifton Chronicles* – a ‘quintology’ he decided to write when he turned 70.

“I must say, I am disappointed,” he continues. “This week I've given talks in Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town. Everywhere, all I see are white colonial faces. Do you know, when I go to India, I have 3 000 Indians turning up at my talks. Fifty million Indians have read *Kane & Abel*.

“Where are my black readers? I asked my publisher about this. I said, ‘Why don't we just give the books away for nothing in certain areas?’ I think they are taking me seriously. I mean, I don't believe in equality, but I do believe in equality of opportunity.

“The other thing that strikes me about South Africa is how well turned out the South African

with a twinkle, he adds: “I write for my country, you know.”

He tells me that sales of *The Sins of the Father* are already up 170% on Book 1, *Only Time Will Tell*. “And those who read the second book will go back and buy the first. It was a nerve-racking experience deciding to publish five books in five years. What if the first one had

“I don't believe in equality, but I do believe in equality of opportunity”

women are – you look beautiful. But the men? They must be the scruffiest men in the world! I had a real go at them this morning. Made the women laugh. Ha!”

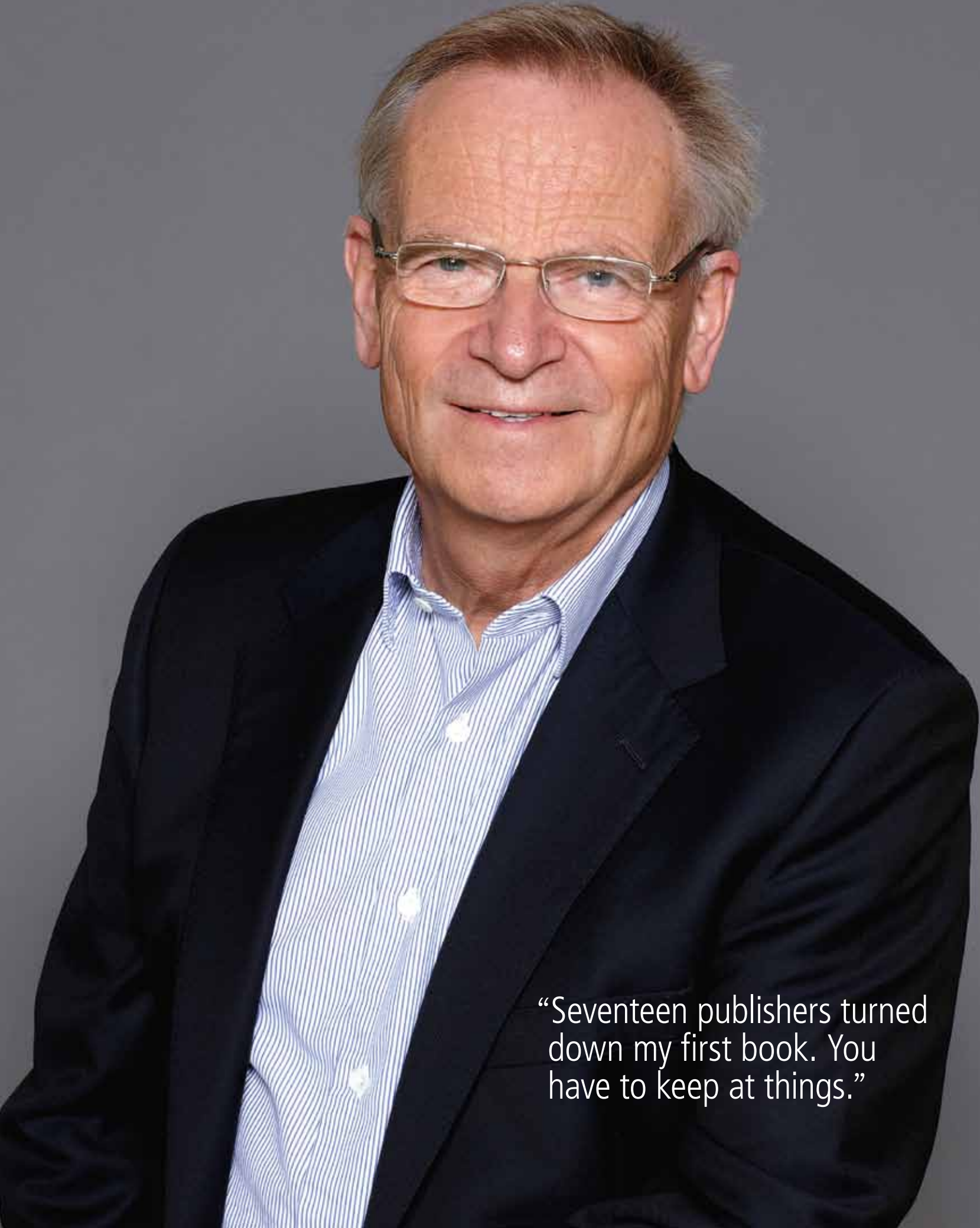
Archer is in high spirits. The man who tells me that Stephen King, John Grisham and JK Rowling are his only real contenders, heard this morning that *The Sins of the Father* is number one on four continents.

“I've never done that before,” he says, smoothing his tailored shirt over the kind of trim torso *Men's Health* readers sweat for. Then,

failed? As it is, I'm on the eighth draft of Book 3; another six to go. I write eight hours a day. In 10 months, I'll be ready to bring out this third one, and who knows what will happen then?

“Nadine Gordimer brought out her latest book the same day I did. Three days later she'd sold 253 copies; I had sold 27 000. It's a tough business to make money. And it's got a lot tougher with *Facebook*, blogs, *Twitter*, all vying for people's attention ...

“I sold one million copies of *Kane & Abel* in the first week,” Archer says, wryly adding that



“Seventeen publishers turned down my first book. You have to keep at things.”

“only Rowling can still produce those kinds of numbers today.”

When I say that at least the patriot in him must be pleased with her success, he responds in mock outrage, “She’s a Scot!”

“You’re quite competitive,” I remark.

“Competitive?! Whatever gave you that idea?” he jests, then recounts an anecdote – possibly apocryphal, but one he says has always amused him. “When Maria Callas was asked what she wanted for a performance in Milan, she said, ‘I don’t give a damn, as long as it’s one dollar more than Joan Sutherland!’”

I ask Archer, the son of a printer, what he wanted to be when he grew up. “Prime minister,” he barks, not missing a beat. Indeed, he had a

auctioneer; the Robin Hood of auctioneers!” – and has used his skills to raise more than £40-million for various charities over the years.

When I ask if he has read the local newspaper updates on our own disgraced auctioneer Rael Levitt, who allegedly used ghost bidders to drive up closing bid prices, Archer is shocked. “Though it must be said I have been tempted, knowing there’s a wealthy widow in the audience who wouldn’t miss a couple of thousand that some charity desperately needs.”

I ask him if the Receiver of Revenue (the seller in the Wendy Appelbaum bid that uncovered Levitt’s dubious methods) counts as a charity. He laughs. “No. Anyway, it’s against the law, even if the money goes to charity.”

“I’ve lost a small fortune along the way, but I’ve made much more than I’ve lost”

promising career in politics: he was a Member of Parliament for Louth at the age of 29, and was earmarked for a ministerial post in the Cabinet – “Minister of Transport, in fact” – when he invested heavily in a Canadian company on the advice of the Bank of Boston. The company went into liquidation, and three directors were sent to jail for fraud. On the brink of bankruptcy, Archer resigned from the House of Commons in 1982.

Desperate to repay his £427 727 debt, he decided to write a novel. “I had no idea how difficult it is to make money out of writing. But I was lucky. I have a god-given talent for storytelling. But that doesn’t mean it was an easy ride,” he adds. “Seventeen publishers turned down that first book, *Not A Penny More, Not A Penny Less* ... I only really hit my stride with my third book. Like everything, it’s 90% hard work.

“Bad luck can be a game changer. If I hadn’t lost everything I would be one of those irritating people who come up to me every so often and say, ‘I would write a book if I had the time’ or, ‘If you wrote the story of my life, it would be a best-seller’. Really?” Archer laughs. “I want to ask them, ‘Great, have you murdered three people?’”

Given his gift of the gab, it is no surprise that he is a keen auctioneer – “the leading amateur

I am about to ask about his own brush with the law in 2001, when he was sentenced to four years in jail for perjury, but he deflects the conversational course with a question, as all great charmers do: “Don’t your readers want to know what I do with all the money I make from writing?”

He invests all his money in theatre. “I’ve put millions in. It’s a laugh – much more fun than Norwich Union, which is what my son would prefer me to invest in. I’ve lost a small fortune along the way – £600 000 within a few weeks on *Flashdance* alone – but on balance I’ve made much more than I’ve lost. Much more.

“I own 50% of the theatrical rights to *Grease*, 50% of *Chicago*, 25% of *The Sound of Music*, 85% of *Dirty Dancing* ... The last time I handed over a £100 000 cheque for a more high-brow production, I made the snooty director hold the cheque and say, ‘Thank you, *Grease!*’

“I invested £3-million in *Top Hat The Musical*, which opened last night (9 May). I’ll only know in six weeks if it’s a winner or a loser. You never know for sure, but I’ve a great feeling about the next one. *The Bodyguard* is going to be the smash hit of 2013. Before she died, Whitney Houston came to the producers and gave them the rights to all 15 of her number-one hits. She

said she wanted the theatrical production of her movie to be a success, and the royalties would have been useful, no doubt, given her situation at the time,” says Archer.

“And we have the most sensational singer, Heather Headley. Never heard of her, right? Well, people are going to be tearing down the chandeliers for her. She’s a gospel singer who trained for opera, and she has a voice ... When I heard her sing ‘I Will Always Love You’ at the Clapham Community Centre where David Ian, the senior producer, had pulled in all his possible investors, I put down £4.7-million, just like that. She made the session artists cry, for heaven’s sake.”

I ask him if he is religious. “No, although I have found myself looking up and thanking God after I’ve written a sentence that’s pleased me.”

Archer’s plots are more often than not inspired by real-life experiences – he writes convincingly about politics and prison life in many of his novels – but, like all writers, he is also adept at plagiarising the lives of others. “I don’t make it up: I find someone who’s been there and ask him to take me through it; the technique may be mine, but the story is his.”

He has also written three non-fiction novels: the three volumes of his *A Prison Diary – Hell, Purgatory and Heaven* – chronicle his experiences from HMP Belmarsh, a double A-Category high-security prison in South London, which houses some of Britain’s most violent criminals (“the worst three weeks of my life”); to his transfer to HMP Wayland, a medium security prison in Norfolk where he awaited “reclassification”; and finally to his release on parole in July 2003.

But Archer bounced back, as always. Given the rich experiences he has had, the fun he has making money and his happy marriage, I ask him what he still wants to achieve. His eyes glitter as he says: “Margaret Thatcher once told me, ‘Never let anyone know what you want.’ But I wouldn’t mind if *The Clifton Chronicles* turned me into the best-selling author in the world.”

He offsets this with a playful, self-deprecating laugh, then bounces the question back. By the time I am herded out of the Mount Nelson suite by his publicist, I am inspired to write my own novel. I send his publicist an SMS, asking if Archer will read it. I never received a reply.

Ringo got it wrong. The only piss Archer sells is his own. ▲

Pippa de Bruyn

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**ENERGY
CYBERNETICS**

Hot air? Or not!

We tackle the climate change debate and pit two opposing views against each other



Climate change is a scientific fact

Well, is climate change real or is it not? Do the denialists have a point? Are we being led down the garden path by unscrupulous governments, big business or activists?

The first point to come to grips with is that the vast majority of us, no matter how well educated we feel we are, are simply not qualified to participate in the discussion.

We need to understand how the scientific process works. Naomi Oreskes and Erik Conway point out in their book, *Merchants of Doubt*, a comprehensive view of the role of some scientists in denialism, that we live in a complex and highly specialised world, one that has been made possible by the achievements of science and technology.

Because of this complexity, we have to rely on our experts: people who have dedicated years and decades to understanding issues in their disciplines, be they brain surgeons, nuclear physicists, climate scientists, or whatever.

The foundational ethic of scientific work is the use of journals, conferences and peer reviews, so that claims can be reported clearly and subjected to the rigorous scrutiny of other experts. What counts as knowledge are the ideas and claims that are then accepted by them. Science only provides the consensus of experts, based on the organised accumulation and scrutiny of evidence.

Initially in a scientific debate, there can be many viewpoints. Research then produces evidence, which in time settles a question; after that point there are no 'sides'.

There is simply accepted scientific knowledge – the consensus of expert opinion on that particular subject.

Earth orbits the Sun; the continents are drifting; Earth is warming and this is being caused partly by human activities. No one can publish an article in a peer-reviewed scientific journal claiming the Sun orbits the Earth, or claiming there is no global warming.

Today, all but a tiny handful of climate experts are convinced that Earth's climate is heating up, and that human activities are a significant cause.

We must remember that reaching the current state of knowledge of climate science has taken years and decades of painstaking peer-reviewed research by thousands of experts; spreading the nonsense of climate denialism via letters, comment and articles is the work of minutes and hours by a handful of non-experts.

Of course, foolish faith in authority is the enemy of truth. But so is foolish cynicism. On climate change, the situation is clear: it is happening and we are a significant cause of it, mostly through the burning of the fossil fuels coal, oil and gas.

So if climate change is real, and if it is being caused partly by human activities, why is there any debate at all? It is because we are confusing the public with scientific debates. They are not the same thing. This is the second point to come to grips with.

Public debate, in newspapers and magazines, on television and radio, on open platforms, is part of our way of life. We are accustomed to giving space to people with dissenting viewpoints; we think it is only fair, and often we enjoy the argument. Audiences who are presented with two opposing viewpoints assume both have validity.

Denying climate change and the realities of planetary boundaries is an intellectual cop-out

What they do not realise, is that in scientific matters the dissenting viewpoint might have been considered and rejected by the expert peer group; the dissident has subsequently turned to the media and public opinion for attention.

Hence, we are periodically bombarded in the columns of *Business Day* and the like by irate outbursts from non-experts denying climate change and/or its causes. To add to the confusion, the majesty of their words often conceals the mediocrity of their thinking (to paraphrase Aneurin Bevan's comment on Winston Churchill).

Global policy around environmental sustainability has focused almost exclusively

on climate change as well as carbon dioxide emissions reduction.

But in recent years, a new approach has emerged and gradually gained influence, arguing that targeting climate change and emissions alone is insufficient.

The planet is a system of inextricably inter-related environmental processes and each must be managed in balance with the others to sustain stability.

Research published by the Stockholm Resilience Centre in 2009 consolidates this thinking and proposes a framework based on Nine Planetary Boundaries. These collectively define a safe operating space for humanity where social and economic development does not create lasting and catastrophic environmental change. The boundaries include climate change and ocean acidification – both a result of our disturbing the planetary carbon cycle; widespread water pollution and degradation of numerous lakes, rivers and coastal oceans by disruption of the nitrogen cycle through excessive fertiliser use; and stratospheric ozone depletion by substances such as chlorofluorocarbons).

Three boundaries of the nine have already been exceeded. Based on current trends, the limits of others are fast approaching.

Added to this, we should recognise that human civilisation has been built upon two pillars. The first has been an unusually stable and relatively warm climate over the last 10 000 years, which has allowed communities to settle and farm, and ultimately to develop into complex societies.

Two thousand years ago, there were around 200 million people; today there are almost 7 000 million.

This explosion of population has been facilitated by the second pillar – the availability of cheap energy from coal, oil and gas. World annual energy consumption has rocketed



Dave Collins

from around four exajoules (10^{18} joules) 2 000 years ago to over 500 exajoules today, with 90% coming from fossil fuels (never mind the scary units, look at the 125-fold increase).

While we will only finally run out of fossil fuels in the next few decades, we need to start using alternative energy sources such as wind, nuclear and solar now, before the effects of climate change overwhelm us.

Denying climate change and the realities of planetary boundaries is not just a waste of time and energy – it is an intellectual cop-out.

The challenge for most of us as non-experts is not to try to understand the science behind these realities, but to recognise and acknowledge the conclusions of our designated experts. If we ignore them, who can we then turn to for views on the important issues regarding the natural world that face us? ▲

Dave Collins

Collins is with MAC Consulting in Johannesburg. With a lifelong interest in climate change, he consults on climate-change response and energy strategies to many of the top 100 companies on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, the South African coal industry and to various industry organisations. He has a master's degree in Chemical Engineering from Cambridge University in the United Kingdom.

Why you should be sceptical

Let me mention up front – the world is getting warmer. The evidence is perfectly clear that since about 1850, it has warmed. Not steadily, but in a series of hiccups – warmer until about 1880, cooler until about 1910, rapidly warmer until about 1940, cooler until about 1970, rapidly warmer until about 2000, and pretty even since then. The warming between 1910 and 1940 was about as rapid as the warming between 1970 and 2000.

Now some people say it is all the result of carbon dioxide. I doubt that for the simplest of reasons. Until recently, mankind put very little CO₂ into the air. It was only after 1950 that our use of fossil fuels really climbed, and it was only since about 1950 that the CO₂ in the air has increased markedly. So CO₂ was not associated with the warming between 1910 and 1940, or between 1850 and 1880. It may have played a part in the warming since 1980.

There are good physical reasons that a bit more greenhouse gas in the air is likely to cause some warming – a scientist called John Tyndall demonstrated that in the 19th century. The problem is to estimate how much of the



Dr Philip Lloyd

observed warming is natural and how much is caused by the greenhouse gases.

The ‘bible’ on the subject is written by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). It says that if you double the quantity of greenhouse gases, the temperature will shoot up by about 3°C. Today we are close to doubling the greenhouse gases, and the warming between 1950 and today is more like 0.5°C. Moreover, the IPCC says that when it gets hotter on Earth, it gets hotter faster about 10 kilometres up – yet measurements show that it is not. The temperature at 10km is virtually the same as it was in 1950, when we first started flying weather balloons that high. So the science is dicey.

One part of me is a scientist, and that part looks at the data and says we still have a long way to go. Another part of me is a normal human being, and I look at what some of the climate scientists are getting up to, and I shudder. They lie, they cheat, they scheme and plot, all the while pretending to be scientists. A plethora of leaked emails showed a bunch of conniving bastards at work – or that the scientists concerned were human and fallible, depending on your point of view.

Even the IPCC is flawed. A recent Canadian analysis tracked the origins of the last edition of its ‘bible’. About half of the cited reports were not peer-reviewed, as they are so often claimed to be, and some were drawn directly from activist literature.

I discovered the story, that increasing temperature would increase the spread of malaria, was a fudge by a climate activist. Worse, when the error was pointed out by a man who had spent his life fighting malaria, his advice was pointedly ignored and the fudge appeared in the IPCC bible. A million or so Africans can die annually of a preventable disease, while the world’s leaders gather at Conferences of the Parties (COPs) to talk about climate change.

To me, this typifies the problem posed by climate change. The activists preach gloom and despondency. According to them, the seas will rise and flood our shores – while the engineer in me says, “Haven’t you noticed? We have built strong defences against the waves.”

According to them, life on Earth will soon disappear – while the naturalist in me says, “Really? Life has done quite a lot of living, what with ice ages and the like.”

According to them, we will soon be hit by deluges last seen at the Great Flood – while the

realist in me says, “It has been getting warmer for 150 years. Why can’t I see the heavens opening?”

According to them, we are seeing some of the warmest years on record – while the rationalist in me says, “But of course it’s getting warmer!”

At its worst, the gloom is used to try to bully us into immediate action. The thesis, espoused with particularly great vigour by Lord Nicholas Stern, is that it is worth spending a large portion of our wealth now to protect ourselves against future disasters. I come from a family of insurance brokers, and I know he is mistaken. Economists far more skilled than I have pointed out the error of his ways. He reappears with monotonous frequency, bearing the Holy Grail of carbon taxes. Politicians of all shades adore him; he has finally given them a reason to tax hot air.

The rationale behind carbon taxes is flawed. There is a direct relationship between energy consumption and the creation of wealth. Because over 80% of our energy comes from fossil fuels, the relationship between carbon emissions and the creation of wealth is almost as direct.

All the rhetoric about the transition to a low-carbon world is nothing more than talk. Under today’s technologies, a lower carbon world is a poorer world, and few actively seek to be poorer. At the COP 17 climate change summit last year, while the world leaders were failing to negotiate the transition, the World Coal Association was asking for help. They could not understand how coal demand could increase every year by two billion tonnes when low carbon was the aim.

Ultimately, this is why I am a sceptic. The costs of the proposed cures are huge. There is a touch of the do-gooder about many of the climate alarmists. They would have us change our lifestyles to save the world. I disagree with them not because I am comfortable with my lifestyle, but because there are many, particularly in Africa, who do not have comfortable lives. I would rather help make their lives better, than try to persuade them we were prepared to change our ways.

The alarmists invoke the world I will leave to my children and grandchildren. I have news for them: my children and grandchildren are going to cope with whatever disasters I leave them, just as you and I had to cope with the disasters our parents handed us. ▲

Dr Philip Lloyd

Energy Institute

Cape Peninsula University of Technology

Live the life of Reilly

We all like the finer things in life. The ultimate in being successful is giving yourself the time to do what you want to do and being able to afford it. *Leadership* looks at some of the finer things to buy and places to go. Go on, if you can – indulge yourself!

Even Ferrari is now going green

Ferrari will turn to fuel-saving hybrid technology to create its most powerful and expensive model, showing that even elite performance cars are under pressure to get greener.

The Italian automaker's first hybrid, called the F70 in trade press and blogs, will probably surpass the \$850 000 price of the limited edition Enzo, said a person familiar with the plan.

Using technology developed for Formula One racing, the model will combine two electric motors with a 12-cylinder gasoline engine to produce more horsepower than any previous Ferrari, while cutting fuel consumption to 40%.

"Dedicated Ferrari drivers look first at power and technology," said Fabio Barone, chairperson of the Passione Rossa Ferrari owner's club, who has two Ferraris. "The new Enzo will satisfy their appetite."

The model is part of a wave of green supercars as high-end automakers step up efforts to make their models environmentally palatable, while still maintaining or boosting performance.



To go where no man has gone before

The first accredited agent to sell space flights in South Africa has been appointed. Vanessa Rothery joined the team of 140 international accredited space agents after completing an intensive training programme.

The spaceships used, *VSS Enterprise* and *VMS Eve*, will carry six passengers on suborbital space flights. The test flight programme is under way, and Virgin Galactic's commercial operations are based in New Mexico, United States.

During the flights, the passengers will experience zero gravity and views of Earth from space, at a cost of around US\$200 000 (about R1.6-million).

Passengers will undergo astronaut training and G-force acclimatisation before the flight, which will reach altitudes of more than 100 kilometres above the Earth.

"Virgin Galactic aims to make space travel more attainable to the general public and uses technology that overcomes the fundamental safety, cost and environmental issues currently associated with space access," said Virgin Galactic's commercial director Stephen Attenborough at the South African launch.

Virgin has already secured R1.5-million deposits from two South Africans to travel aboard the spacecraft and 500 lucky (and rich, no doubt) people have already signed up across the world.

Let's be honest: who would not want to go? If you have the bank balance, do not hesitate – get hold of Vanessa Rothery via email: vanessa.rothery@ulusaba.virgin.com.

Check out the incredible spacecrafts at www.virgingalactic.com

Appropriate responses to global crises cannot be disconnected from each other. Climate change, financial crisis, peak oil/energy security, food security, waste generation, water and soil degradation, the destruction of habitat and the extinction of species all impact each other directly or indirectly in a matrix of connectedness.

Everything we do – from the groceries we buy to the buildings we occupy, to the vehicles we drive, to the goods and services we procure and which are procured on our behalf down the value chain, to the mining and processing of resources, to manufacture, exportation and importation of goods – impacts the environment which is a globally interconnected system.

That is why Sustainability Week has been introduced to help you connect all the dots. Join South Africans in engaging on these critical issues in an effort to make our economy and society more resilient.

Sustainability Week features sessions on green building; water efficiency and protection; energy efficiency and renewable energy; waste minimisation and recycling; social housing and the green economy.

Sustainability Week features a five-day exhibition from 25 to 29 July, with the first three days focused on trade visitors and running alongside the various conferencing activities, and culminating in the Green Home Fair over the weekend.

The Green Home & Lifestyle Fair welcomes the public to visit the exhibition and to learn more about the various products, services and technologies that are moving South Africa toward a more sustainable future. Sustainability Week takes place at the Sandton Convention Centre.

For more information, visit www.sustainabilityweek.co.za

Don't miss the Green Home & Lifestyle Fair 2012



Luxury brand launches to change lives

The name 'Taunina' is an amalgamation of the African word *tau*, meaning 'lion'; and NINA, an acronym for 'No Income, No Assets'. Taunina gives women who were once without income and assets the power to become lions of their own destinies.

Taunina is a sustainable luxury brand synonymous with artistry and social impact. Committed to meaningfully contributing to the lives of women in need, it employs artists from disadvantaged communities and affords them the opportunity to use traditional artistry and their heritage to create exquisite one-of-a-kind handmade collections. The rare beauty of each collection piece lies in how it transforms the life of the women who made it, and establishes a lifetime connection between the artist and the purchaser.

Established in 2011 by South African Tracey Chiappini-Young and Brazilian-American Karen Jansen, Taunina is elevating the status of craft to art, and opening the world's eyes and hearts to the inimitable value of gifts that realise dreams – changing lives one stitch at a time.

Get one for yourself or a loved one from www.taunina.com



Don't quote me

"To sit here at the same table with my hero, George W. Bush ... I feel like I'm dreaming. Somebody pinch me. You now what, I'm a pretty sound sleeper, that may not be enough – somebody shoot me in the face."
– Steve Martin, American actor/comedian

"Dogs are the leaders of the planet. If you see two life forms, one of them's making a poop, the other one's carrying it for him – who would you assume is in charge?"
– Jerry Seinfeld, American actor/comedian

"A lie gets halfway around the world before the truth has a chance to get its pants on."
– Winston Churchill, British statesman

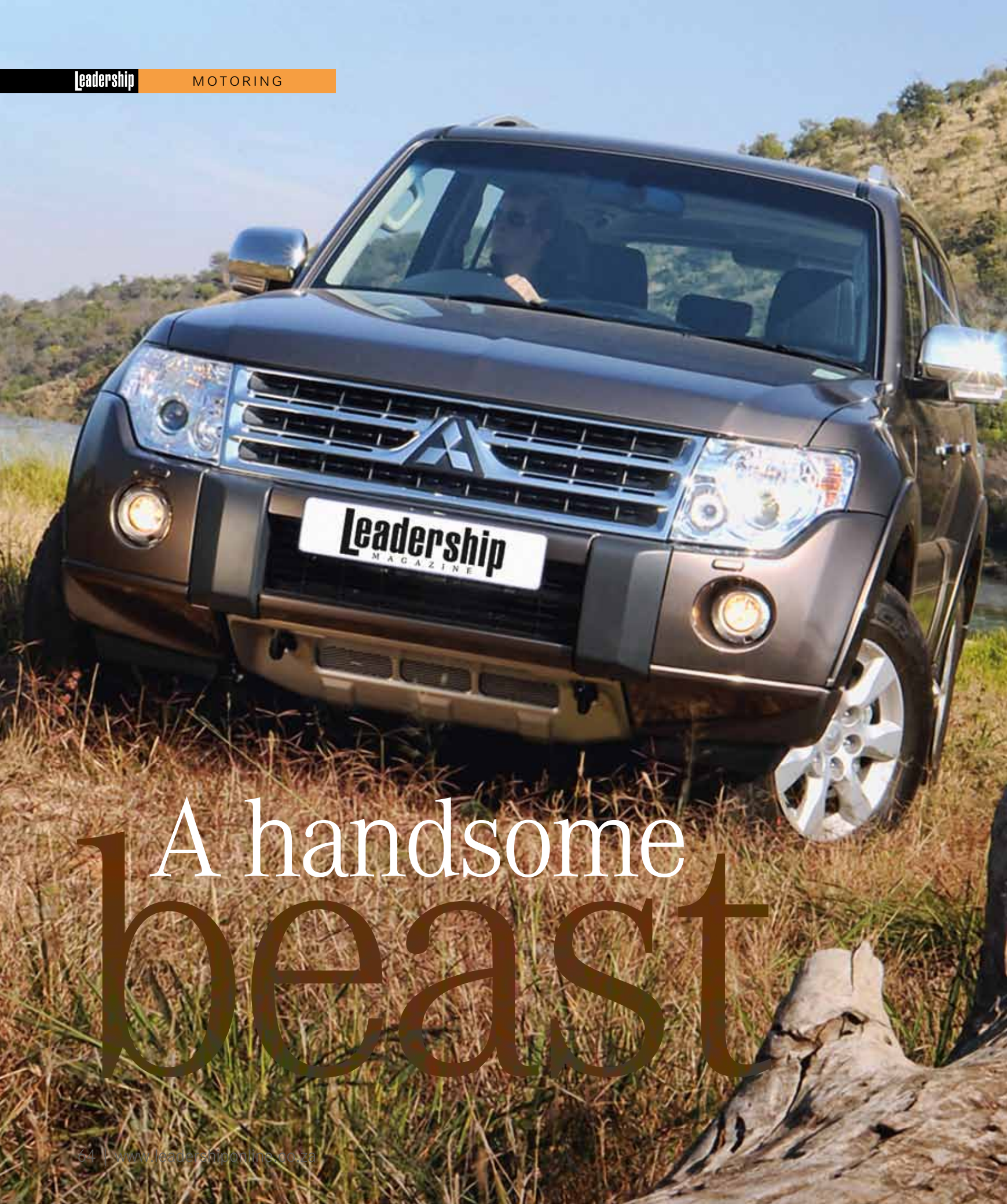
"I want you to know that also I will not make age an issue of this campaign. I am not going to exploit, for political purposes, my opponent's youth and inexperience."
– Ronald Reagan, former United States president



The indelible image

Lions climbing trees? Are you off your tree, or perhaps barking mad? Well, it appears not, as *Leadership* editor Robbie Stammers and well-known photojournalist Graham Howe recently discovered on a trip to the Zambezi National Park in Zambia. What makes a lion climb a tree? Some claim it is in order to keep away from the bites of flies or simply to catch a cool breeze on scorching days. Whatever the reason, this tree-climbing lion was a rare sight indeed, even being a first for our seasoned game ranger. It certainly made the King of the Beasts seem less regal than usual with all the precarious balancing that took place.

Photo: Graham Howe



A handsome beast

Mitsubishi Pajero Sport

I must admit that I was looking forward to trying out Mitsubishi's seven-seater Pajero Sport, which is now available in South Africa with a manual transmission. The thought of its four-speed tiptronic auto transmission mated to its 3.2-litre turbodiesel engine had me itching to give it a go.

The Pajero does not lack road presence and it can actually be termed handsome. As you can see from the photograph, the Pajero Sport is very much in keeping with Mitsubishi's exalted off-road heritage and it does not disappoint in this area. It tackles steep inclines and heart-stopping declines without effort.

The engine delivers 120kW/343Nm and, as it is a Euro 3-compliant engine, is perfectly happy running on 500ppm diesel fuel that is freely available across the country. Estimates for its fuel economy are 10.5 litres to 100km and (this is in an urban setting) a top speed of 178km/h, which it can handle more than comfortably.

All Pajero Sport models, including the latest five-speed manual, have part-time all-wheel drive with low range, a centre differential and a rear diff-lock.

This Super Select 4X4 allows the driver to select the 4H off-road setting from 2H tar-road mode while driving below 100km/h – as has the Pajero since its first models. The 4H setting gives a 33:67 power split between the front and rear wheels, respectively.

Additionally, the Pajero Sport has been upgraded for 2012 with a number of equipment changes. The headlights have been slightly

tweaked; washers (mounted on the front bumper) have been added. There is a revised instrument cluster; a USB port to complement the MP3-enabled, six-speaker audio system; and new leather upholstery.

Air-conditioning ducts are fitted in the roof lining over the second row of seats to make it more accessible to those in the back two rows, and additional storage space and cup holders are provided for those seated in the third row.

The second and third rows of seats can be folded to provide seating for one to five people, depending on load requirements, and I had no problem taking a horde of young rugby-playing boys to a match in the Boland, with room to spare.

The Pajero Sport comes with a high level of standard equipment that includes cruise control, a multifunction display (with a compass and altimeter along with your regular outside temperature and range readings), parking radar and power windows.

Safety features include a reinforced body, six air bags and anti-lock brakes with electronic pressure distribution and traction control.

The Pajero Sport is sold with a three-year or 100 000km warranty and a five-year or 100 000km service plan. The service interval is at 10 000km.

Go out and get one, then make sure you head off-road as soon as possible. ▲

Prices:

Pajero Sport 3.2 manual – R435 900

Pajero Sport 3.2 auto – R445 900

Robbie Stammers

Seeking greener pastures

At home in our own backyard

A few weeks ago, I spent a Sunday afternoon doing what most young black South Africans like to do on Sundays: drinking at what we call a *chisa nyama* (translated as ‘burning meat’). This particular place was one to which I had not been before, which combined the *chisa nyama* culture with another township favourite: a car wash.

When we arrived at the *chisa nyama* with a few mates, we pulled out our camp chairs like everyone around us, got the cooler box out, opened a few beers, ordered some braai meat and took the car in for a wash. Places like these are normally chock-a-block on most weekend afternoons, but on that particular day it seemed the place was even fuller than normal.

As usual, the conversation turned from serious, touching a whole range of pertinent current affairs issues, to the usual boy talk about... ladies and sport, naturally!

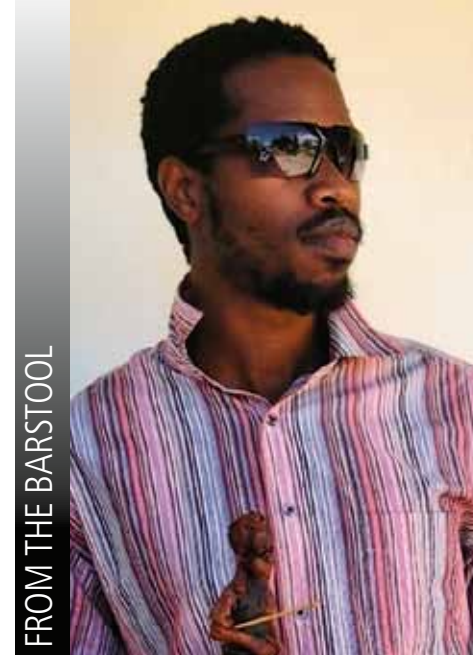
As I was sitting with my mates and enjoying a few beers, the first thing that struck me was how dirty the place was. Cans and beer bottles everywhere, with no dustbins in sight. People just throw their rubbish away, without a care in the world as to who will clean up after them and how it negatively affects the environment. No one is bothered about keeping the place clean and taking care of it.

It struck me that this is a common phenomenon in all the townships you can visit in South Africa, no matter which part of the country you are in. Looking after and taking care of their external environment is not something that concerns a majority of South Africans at that level. So while the world is busy trying to tackle big environmental issues such as climate change and global warming, among others, the majority of people in this country are not even bothered about keeping clean their immediate surroundings.

While activists and certain middle-class types are busy fighting key environmental issues such as fracking in the Karoo, the average South African could not even be bothered with simple environmental issues such as not littering, recycling, etc.

Given that South Africa is at a key developmental stage, it would seem obvious to me that one of the key things we need to do as a country is to encourage socially responsible, environmentally friendly development – yet how can we, when the majority does not even care about the basic cleanliness of its immediate environment?

So I asked myself: what needs to be done in order to make South Africa a country of environmentally aware and environmentally friendly citizens? How do we change environmental issues from being ‘elite issues’ to those that are of concern and priority to the majority of South Africans?

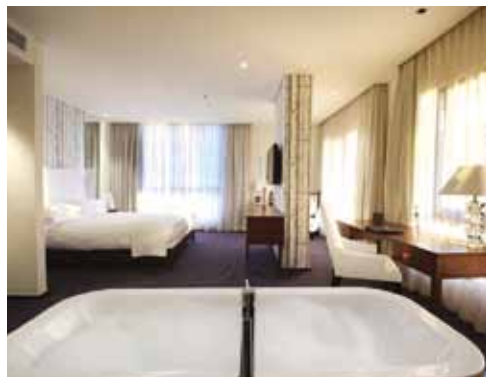


FROM THE BARSTOOL

I know the typical South African thing to do is look to the government for answers, but I really think the challenge needs to be put to all those ‘greenies’ out there: what are you doing to promote greater awareness of environmental issues among the majority of South Africans, and how can you involve them in your quest to promote more environmentally friendly policies and practices at various levels of South African society?

In my view, more needs to be done to promote a ‘green’ culture among ordinary South Africans. Perhaps all these ‘greenie’ types can learn from their political contemporaries about mobilising ordinary, average South Africans for positive social change because, in the end, whether we acknowledge or see it or not, we all have a vested interest in building a South Africa that is economically productive and efficient as well as environmentally friendly. We all need to see the benefit of protecting the beautiful environmental heritage that has been bequeathed to us, for the benefit of future generations, instead of sacrificing it at the altar of economic expediency.

So, my friends in the townships of South Africa need to be as much a part of environmental campaigns as those middle-class types who so often are at the forefront of such issues, seeing as we all have much to gain from building a ‘greener’ South Africa. ▲



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What the frack!

Are we all mere foot soldiers?

It is quite possible that when discussion around fracking turns nasty, I am the only person who sees its connection to the foot soldiers throughout history who have faced condemnation for the orders of their masters. Except in this case, we are those 'foot soldiers', and we are also our own masters.

I have a habit of seeing connections that others say do not exist. My wife says I am just 'otherwise'; and yet Malcolm Gladwell, Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner do exactly the same thing, and their careers have been highly lucrative! I must write down these things.

But I digress. In 2004, when news broke that American military police guards at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq had been torturing Iraqi prisoners of war, the finger of responsibility was jabbed at the guards, then their direct commanders, then the American military machine and, finally, at 'society' in general. The guards claimed they were simply following orders, and that these orders were either directly given or indirectly understood.

This is a common defence where foot soldiers have been involved in atrocities. When dragged before a tribunal to account for their actions, they have claimed they were 'just following orders'.

But what if they had been directly or indirectly sending a demand up the chain of command to execute those actions for which they stood accused? Would it be fair to demand they account for those actions?

It is a rhetorical question, and one that should be borne in mind whenever public opinion cries foul over fracking, or to use its more accurate name – hydraulic fracturing. This relatively new development is used by the energy industry to access untapped reserves of oil or natural gas, such as that locked within shale rock.

It is a highly technical procedure that involves powering large amounts of water and chemicals, under extreme pressure, into fissures within the shale to release the reserves of gas. It is geologically invasive and, to a relatively high degree, experimental. It is highly controversial and even banned in some countries.

But have those who condone fracking ever thought why energy companies are doing it? Is it because they get some kind of perverse kick out of rupturing the ground beneath our feet – the geological equivalent of drop-kicking the neighbour's Maltese poodle? Do they bottle the gas and put it on shelves to proudly admire over a six-pack of beers? Are they training for a Fracking World Cup? Of course not.

Energy companies are fracking because we demand cheap fuel. Every time the price of fuel rises, we complain – and we should. But when we do, we send a message up the chain of provision that we are unhappy. This puts pressure on energy companies to find better/easier/cheaper sources of fuel. But fuel does not grow on trees – actually, that is not entirely true: fuel is trees, just long dead, seriously squashed trees.

As a result, some perilous digging and drilling needs to take place, and that has nasty

consequences for our planet. However, we believe the planet is big enough to take the occasional knock or two. Or three.

But what if every time an oil well was drilled, a baby panda died? I would hazard a guess people would be unhappy, but they would still fill up with fuel; after all, how else are they going to get their children to soccer practice?

It is the price we conveniently forget to pay for being a consumer – the damage done in the provision of the products we consume. Every iPod is packed with rare earth minerals; innocent animals die for every plate of mince; and, of course, petrol comes from a particularly messy procedure that fuels wars.

But we demand affordable products and reward companies that find us the most affordable merchandise by buying it; and in the process, we send a message – either directly or indirectly up the chain of provision – that we do not really care what they do to get them.

In a way, it is like the guards at Abu Gharib sending a message up the chain of command saying, "We'd really like to beat these people, but we don't want to be accountable for our actions – please can you just give us the order to do so"; and their commanders, wanting to keep their soldiers motivated, doing just that.

As consumers, we are no mere foot soldiers at the bidding of our masters; it is we who send the orders. Fracking is nasty, there is no denying that; but until we come to terms with the fact that it is what we have ordered, we have to be guarded in condemning it. ▲

REALITY BITES





Retirement epiphany

Think before you sink (and drink)

The leadership qualities of great men and women are not judged upon their success, behaviour or philanthropy during the working lives, but when they decide to retire.

Retirement takes immense courage, brave leadership and considerable willpower. Compared with retirement, running a giant multinational conglomeration is chicken feed.

First of all, it means not going into an office every morning, but rather staying at home with your spouse.

The first time your courage will be tested will be on the very first morning when you discover that the passionate goodbye kiss you got every day was not actually a sign of endearment or sadness that you would be away from home for about 10 hours, but rather a sigh of affectionate relief that you would be out of your spouse's hair for a glorious 10 hours and that everything – from the television remote to the time for tea in the morning – would not be the cause of a major interpersonal conflict.

It is a proven fact – or rather, it should be a proven fact – that after only a few months of retirement, most people try to find a job again. Or simply get drunk.

The next great epiphany experienced by retirees is that pension funds are not actually enough to keep up the lifestyle to which they have grown accustomed. Basically for two reasons:

1. You did not factor in the number of office perks you had that allowed you to live the life of Reilly: perks such as a car, company petrol, air miles. Ah yes, air miles – gained on company business and used for personal holidays. Nothing wrong with that and all perfectly legal, but the practice does tend to lull one into a sense of well-being in terms of being able to take an exotic holiday overseas every year. Retirement for the masses is holiday castration.
2. You realise that the insurance company with which you placed your pension contributions and which kept telling you that by investing only a few rands you would be able to retire in the style of Richard Branson the day you turned 60, was lying.

What it did not tell you was that if the stock market was looking healthy on the day you retired, you would have a bit of money on which to retire gracefully. However, if the stock market happened to be down on the day you retired, you would not be able to retire gracefully, but be extremely pissed off and would have to find another job just to pay for bread and milk.

The next great epiphany you will experience is that if you had taken all that money you had ploughed into an insurance company's retirement annuity or other such pension policy, and rather just bought the shares on the stock

market, you would have ended up with 10 times more money.

Now, having discerned that your wife actually did not miss you a damn while you were at the office and that your good buddy the insurance broker turned out to be a sneaky bastard Judas, what else is there in retirement that will kick you in the testicles before the end of your first month?

Well, perhaps you made the great mistake of telling people you were going to retire. This is one of the dumbest things any retiree can do if, indeed, said retiree just wants some peace and quiet and be able to fiddle about in his little workshop or her pottery studio, happily whiling away the hours between blissful sleep, late breakfasts, unhurried lunches and drinks time.

If you tell people you are retiring, they will think, "Aha, he's got nothing to do and he is cheap", and they will entice you back into working harder than you did when you had a proper job for half the money. And you cannot really say no because you will continue thinking the work will be easy and the money easier.

To make it worse, your spouse will really hate you now because not only are you not leaving home for 10 hours, you are actually staying at home – but for 10 hours will not be available to mow the lawn, pick up dog poo, fix the tap and go shopping for Aunt Ethel's 90th birthday present.

So, before you retire, think about it. ▲

JONATHAN LOYNES, analyst at Capital Economics, on the situation in Greece after its leading parties abandoned attempts to form a coalition:

“There is now a considerable danger that Greece simply runs out of money next month: that it can’t pay wages, can’t run public transport, can’t maintain infrastructure and that the country just descends into complete chaos.”

ZWELINZIMA VAVI, general-secretary of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu), responding to the Democratic Alliance (DA) march on Cosatu’s offices in Johannesburg to force the union to change its negative stance on the youth wage subsidy, arguing that the subsidy would create about 400 000 jobs:

“(Zille) is stripped naked. Everywhere, everyone will know the difference between uncompromising principled positions of the working class and those of the DA. I don’t need a wife, I have a very beautiful wife. I am already married; we are not up for the takers. We are married to the ANC. We are married to the SACP [SA Communist Party] and we are married to the Freedom Charter.”

HELEN ZILLE, leader of the DA, addressing the crowd, alternating between isiXhosa and English, before having to seek cover from flying stones from Cosatu members:

“You put us here (in government) and you gave us power. We proposed the youth wage subsidy, President Zuma said ‘yes’ and put aside R5-billion, and Cosatu says ‘no’. Who elected Cosatu into government?”



ENOS NKALA, ROBERT MUGABE’S home affairs and defence minister in the late 1980s, speaking to Zimbabwe’s Standard Sunday newspaper after he and the president recently met in the second city of Bulawayo:

“From what we discussed, Mugabe said he is tired and wants to retire, but he cannot do so now because Zanu-PF would die.”

ROBERTO MANCINI, Manchester City manager, on the extraordinary end to the English Premier League season that saw his team crowned champion:

“We had the best and worst five minutes in our lives ... To win it like this is incredible. I don’t think I’ve ever seen a finale like this.”

BARACK OBAMA, United States president, teasing footballer David Beckham at a recent meeting at the White House:

“He is tough. In fact, it is a rare man who can be that tough on the field and also have his own line of underwear.”

PRESIDENT JACOB ZUMA, protesting about public exposure of his genitals in a painting by Brett Murray being displayed in the Goodman Gallery in Johannesburg:

“It is clear in the eyes of those viewing the portrait that it seeks to depict me in a bad, undignified and degrading manner. Furthermore, in terms of the theme of the exhibition, my portrait is meant to convey a message that I am an abuser of power, corrupt and suffer political ineptness.”

TSELANE TAMBO, daughter of the late ANC veteran Oliver Tambo, showing little sympathy for President Zuma’s complaint about the portrait of himself exposing his genitals:

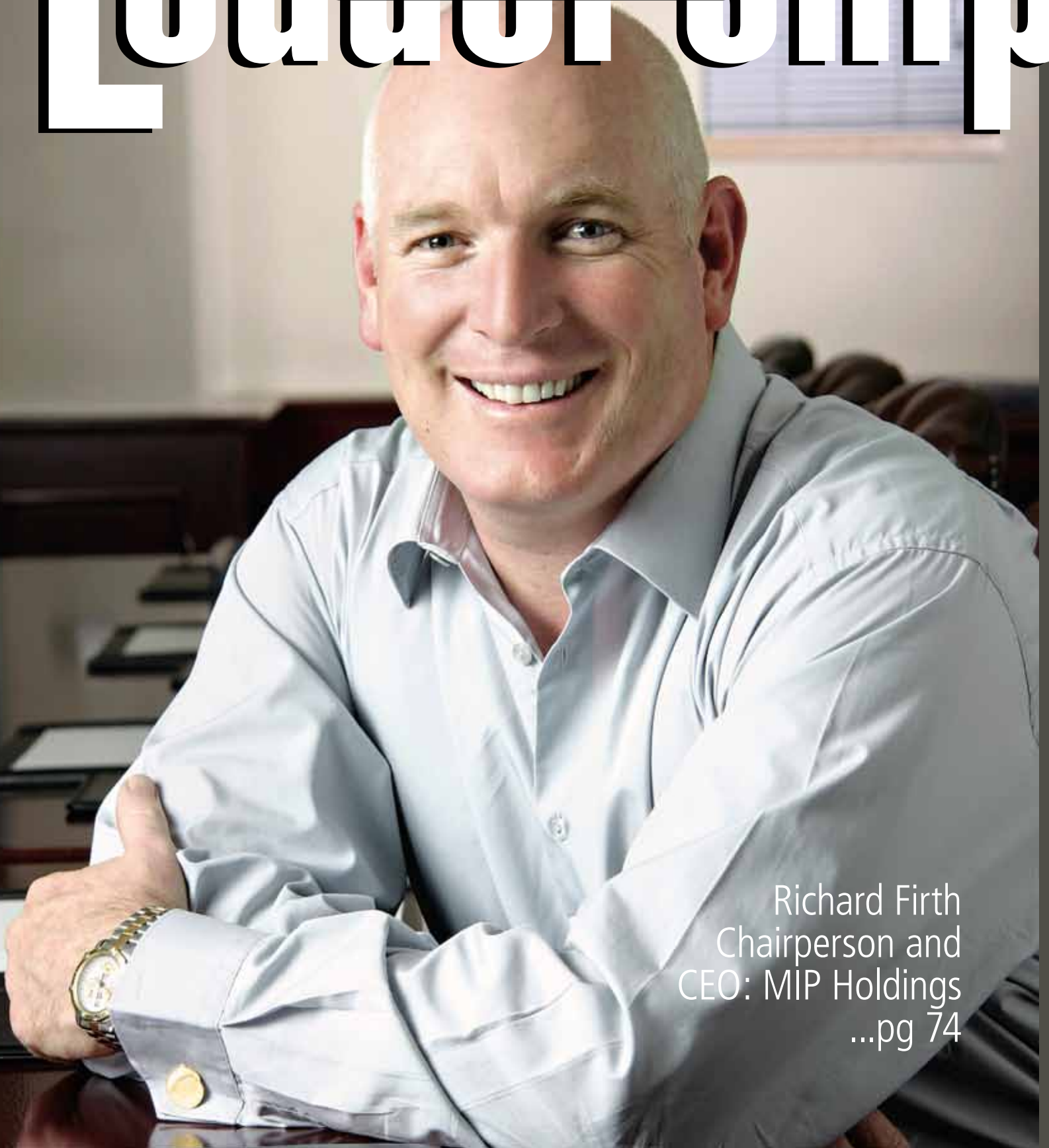
“So the Pres JZ (sic) has had his portrait painted and he doesn’t like it. Do the poor enjoy poverty? Do the unemployed enjoy hopelessness? Do those who can’t get housing enjoy homelessness? He must get over it. No one is having a good time. He should inspire the reverence he craves. This portrait is what he inspired. Shame neh! (sic).”

BRETT MURRAY, in response to his controversial portrait of President Zuma:

“In the apartheid years, I created satirical images that attacked abuses of power. For many years I have used, and continue to use, symbols with sexual connotations representative of political power and patriarchy; I did not intend to cause any hurt or to harm the dignity of any person.”

Leadership

FOCUS



Richard Firth
Chairperson and
CEO: MIP Holdings
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Leadership

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cape media
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MIP Holdings

An acute understanding of the industry and technology benefits clients

For over 18 years, local software company MIP Holdings has been changing the way financial services providers think about – and use – technology. The only software company in the world to offer solutions across all the financial service verticals, MIP is fast achieving its vision to become the number-one provider of affordable business information technology (IT) solutions to this market.

The company manages in excess of eight million policies for several of the big-name assurance and financial institutions in South Africa, offering an IT framework for the administration of services that include medical aid, pension fund, funeral fund, life insurance, unit trust, lending or micro-finance, asset finance, treasury and vehicle

between 20% and 25% over the past five years, achieving an annual turnover of R150-million in the 2011 financial year. This is a feat very few companies have ever achieved.

MIP Holdings chairperson and chief executive officer Richard Firth ascribes the success of his company to several factors, but key among them is a clear understanding of what its target industry requires, as well as constantly evolving to stay dynamic and profitable in a highly competitive environment. These qualities, he believes, have made MIP one of the leading independent administrators of financial services in the South African market.

“What makes MIP work efficiently and profitably is an acute understanding of our industry and technology, and knowing how to marry the two to the benefit of our client,” says Firth. “The general perception is that we spread ourselves

portfolios, providing a major competitive advantage and putting the company in a position to provide a good quality service at reduced cost.

MIP’s unique fit cushions the company against stagnation and losses, according to Firth. “Many IT companies that are born through a single technology do not last. Our spread has enabled us to transform ourselves across multi-business verticals, and that is the reason we have grown for over 18 years.”

The company’s billing model is another unique feature that sets the company apart from its competitors. The software-as-a-service (SaaS) model, in which business applications are delivered as subscription services, is based on charging the client per policy or benefit, per member, per month to run the system.

“About 99% of our revenue is annuity. We are not in the business to sell software – we offer it as a value-adding service model,” Firth explains. The model provides a partnership whereby MIP shares the risk with its clients, as well as allowing both parties to grow off what they sell. As the client grows, MIP grows as well. The company generates consistent revenue this way, and the shared risk provides assurance to its clients that MIP will keep its software current and relevant to their businesses.

The company’s ingenuity and perceptiveness benefit it in all areas of its business and help to keep it financially robust. Nowhere is this more apparent than in MIP’s approach to innovation.

The obligation to keep its technology up to date is met through the company’s vibrant Research and Development (R&D) team, called ‘coretech’. Reporting directly to Firth, this division constitutes 10% of MIP’s 200-strong workforce, and is headed by the chief information officer Patrick

The company’s ingenuity and perceptiveness benefit it in all areas of its business and help to keep it financially robust

maintenance and warranty. This is done through the provision of a unique software offering that allows MIP’s clients to easily and efficiently manage, track and administer all aspects of their customers’ policies.

Adept at reading trends and developing cutting-edge solutions to support its clients in delivering efficiently to their policyholders, MIP Holdings has posted year-on-year growth of

too thin, but our core business is the collection of contributions and payment of benefits. All our companies fit in that portfolio.”

While the diversity in MIP’s product offering may, to the untrained eye, be perceived as a handicap, he explains that it is the trump card that yields gains for the company. Since its operations are central, this means economies of scale are centralised for all MIP’s business



We make solutions... *no problem*



Richard Firth Chairperson and CEO: MIP Holdings

O' Reilly, who also manages the team's technical delivery and operations.

The team receives about 15% of the company's annual budget allocation to consider new technologies and bring out new functions for MIP's software offerings. In addition to providing new and improved products, all components created by coretech are built for easy integration onto existing MIP systems.

In addition, the coretech team engages in a cross-pollination of technological ideas with teams from client companies such as Project Management SA, Sanlam and Hollard in order to ensure MIP is constantly anticipating the needs of its clients and the industry.

The company has a programme called MIPI, encouraging its technical staff to develop – outside office hours – applications that they believe the business could use. MIP offers a financial incentive, buying those innovations that will fit the company's needs from them at market prices.

"MIP has grown from the small start-up it was, into a large company with an international footprint. However, we have retained the fundamental entrepreneurial spirit on which it was founded – from top to bottom," explains Firth. "Our staff love the company, and their passion is reflected in the quality of the products they come up with."

MIP depends on its employees' strategic foresight to chart a profitable path forward for the company.

Ten years ago, Firth and his team of strategists pre-empted a revolutionary era about to dawn in IT, thanks to wireless technology and extended-life batteries. Not only did these herald an increasing mobility in the administration of business, but set the foundation for a huge jump

Award-winning technology

MIP has been recognised by peers and industry, both locally and overseas, for its contributions to the advancement of information technology globally. Gleaming trophies and awards acquired over the years from, among others, US-based Computer World, the Department of Trade and Industry and other IT media, line the company's cabinets.

MIP's accolades include:

- The Department of Trade and Industry award for South African Best Medium Size Enterprise for Technical Innovation – 2002
- Progress Partner of the Year – 2002 and 2004
- Progress Best Technical Innovator – 2002
- Best IT Corporate for 2001/2002, Brainstorm magazine
- IT Personality of the Year finalist, Brainstorm magazine

in the reach of business. The company set out to adjust its offerings accordingly.

MIP brought two new companies into its stable to enable it to fully exploit the prospects the mobile phenomenon holds for MIP and its customers, back-ending financial services onto mobile telephony. The company acquired Itemate in 2010, to give it a technological head-start in billing and administration for mobile networks. A year later, it established a partnership with Waytag. The technology used in Waytag makes location sharing easier by creating unique location tags employing GPS co-ordinates.

“Both technologies enable us to provide access to life cover, via mobile phones, to people who had never before been reached by any other means. It is the future for the administration of health and life services. Business will be conducted with clients solely over a mobile device like a tablet or cellphone. It will have

a 25% to 30% impact on costing structures,” explains Firth.

In addition, he points to the endless uses of the Waytag technology: “Because a Waytag is a permanent address that moves with you wherever you are, it can be used by companies to improve the services they provide.”

So confident is MIP of the prospects mobile business administration holds for it, that Firth recently relieved himself of some of his responsibilities within the company to focus on growing and developing Itemate and Waytag, in conjunction with a continued focus on strategically growing MIP as a holding company.

Long-standing employee Naas Jordaan took over in February 2012 as managing director of MIP Holdings. An industrial engineer with 20 years' experience specialising in software development, programming and project management, he had been with MIP for more than five years, working as the divisional manager for personal finance.

Firth reckons mobile networks will provide the ‘beachhead’ for MIP's success in Africa. He explains: “Africa will be the next economic giant in the world. Much like China and India at the moment, Africa is the future. We believe we are better placed to succeed on the continent, as our systems are appropriate for both first- and third-world markets, and our only competitors are companies that do not understand the particular business and technology constraints that Africa presents.

“MIP systems are built in South Africa, which still has a relatively low bandwidth penetration. We have 60% network saturation, with the balance of the ‘rural’ country still without connectivity. We will operate in Africa the same way we do in areas in our own country that have little or no connectivity. The key here is that we cannot completely do away with manual processes.

“We look to reach the African market through merging financial services with cellular telephony devices. We will use the intellectual

property we have in Itemate to deliver the service. We believe that new technologies will have the highest impact on the African continent, as old processes like telephones, land-line infrastructure and postal codes are not installed, but African countries are moving directly to the wireless digital era,” he adds.

MIP is targeting mobile network operators, insurance companies and the national health insurance. The company has already established a presence in several southern African countries, as well as East and West Africa. It has corporate partnerships in Ghana, Botswana and Tanzania, among others. Currently, MIP has six well-established mobile network operators (MNOs) on the continent. Some of the customers with which it has MNOs are MTN, Orange and Tigo.

According to Firth, however, the playing fields on the continent are still far from smooth. Corruption is rampant and the continent is still trying to lift itself from the ravages of colonialism. Some African countries are much further ahead than others.

“A lesson we have learnt is never to assume anything. There is still much development required – to the infrastructure in general and in transforming technologies to the digital era. Africa is just on the starting blocks. Thankfully, there are many intelligent businesspeople with passion and commitment to see a change for the better.

“Corruption is far greater than we anticipated it would be. We are learning to sift through what may be potential business, actual deals or just fraud,” he adds.

The man at the helm of MIP drives the company with an entrepreneurial zeal replicated among all the company's staff – from senior management downward. MIP, says Firth, has a low staff turnover, and has had long-standing private equity partners who have been investing in MIP for over 10 years – an unusual situation, as most private equity partnerships are a means for short-term profits as well as good cash reserves.

“We are consistently making profit. We have not made a loss in any one year, let alone any one month in our period of operations. Over the years, we have become a better brand, we are better known and have a track record among our clients – this makes us stable. We have also had auditors from the time we started, ensuring we properly manage the underlying financial structures of an IT-based company,” he says.

All this glowing success is the result of a long period of hard work. Firth joined MIP as MD in March 1996, when the company specialised only in medical aid administration. Bringing his extensive experience in the IT sector to his role at MIP, he steered the company on to the growth path it is currently enjoying.

Firth’s successful career in IT began in 1989 with his first IT job as analyst programmer at First National Bank (FNB). Three years later, he won the FNB IT Employee and Programmer of the Year. During this period, he implemented and supported the first online credit card authorisation terminals for the retail industry.

He was also assigned to investigate the viability of using retailers’ cash registers as automated teller machines for customers to withdraw money while paying for groceries. While the technical feasibility of this idea was successful, the innovation was not implemented at that time.

Firth left FNB to join British American Consulting Group, a United States-based consulting company that specialised in IT and central distribution for the retail industry. He was with them for four years, from 1992 to 1996, where he headed the IT implementation team that implemented centralised distribution at the OK Bazaars and then moved to do the same in a world-first for fresh produce goods at Woolworths.

Both national retailers were among the top four retail groups in South Africa and the first companies to roll out central distribution strategies in the country. Woolworths was one of the first fresh produce retailers in the world to roll

out a central distribution system or process for fresh product lines.

Firth was account manager for both the Woolworths project and the OK Bazaars until he was headhunted by MIP, which then had a staff complement of four.

In 2002, he drove MIP to a 45% acquisition of Auto-Mate (Pty) Ltd, a company that runs 65% of the software in the South African motor dealership market.

The software is employed to sell, stock, manage parts and service approximately 70% of South Africa’s motor vehicles. The Auto-Mate dealer management system operated off a central server, with the motor dealers linking into the system online and applying their day-to-day trade.

Firth was chairperson of Auto-Mate for three and a half years.

The company’s market valuation grew 400%, with net profit growing over 800%. MIP sold its

stake back to the company in 2007 under the leadership of MD Michael Botha.

MIP’s future certainly looks bright with Firth at the helm. While he recently fortified his team with the employment of Jordaan as MD, Firth is confident of the abilities of the divisional managers, most of them long-serving members of the company, currently forming his executive management team.

He is happy with how MIP Holdings has grown over the years: steady but sure. “MIP was not an overnight success. The company has grown steadily over the years. That is the preferred way to grow in information technology. It is hard to manage an IT business that grows quickly. It runs the risk of being a fly-by-night company.

“Because MIP is not based on a single technology, and because we have proven our expertise and stability to the market, we are looking forward to similar success going forward,” he concludes. ▲

Making the magic happen

MIP Holdings’ success rests on its people. Headed by Richard Firth, CEO, and MD Naas Jordaan, the company is managed through a number of divisions. Promoting from within the organisation wherever possible, MIP has an extremely low staff turnover and boasts a management team with strong ties to the company.

Mr Mike Stolk (40), who is Divisional Manager: Healthcare, has been with MIP for just over 10 years. His divisions accounts for approximately 25% of the total turnover of MIP Holdings.

Mr Dewald Vorster (37), Divisional Manager: Employee Benefits, has been with MIP for 13 years. His unit accounts for approximately 25% as well of the total turnover of MIP Holdings.

Mr JF (Jacobus Frederick) Hansen (35), Divisional Manager: Personal Finance, has been with MIP for seven years. His unit accounts for nearly 40% of total turnover. While this division is the newest in the company, it earns the highest turnover for MIP Holdings.

Mr Pares Dayal (52), Divisional Manager: Managed Healthcare, has been with MIP for 15 years. His unit accounts for 5% of the company’s turnover through a successful partnership with MSO, an independent managed care company.

The company’s two newest additions to the stable – Itemate and Waytag – are overseen by Firth but have their own respective chief executive officers who manage them.

Mr Mark Parker is CEO of Itemate. The unit employs 25 staff members, 20 of whom are technical engineers of the highest calibre. Itemate has an entity registered in Cyprus, operating in the European Union (EU) region.

Waytag, on the other hand, is a wholly South African-based company headed by Warren Venter.

Kutana Investment Group

Guaranteeing high returns on your investments

Kutana Investment Group is a black female owned and led pan-African BEE investment group. The company focuses on delivering significant shareholder value through sound strategic investment practice, while contributing to the transformation of the economy and society at large. Kutana is pioneered and steered by seasoned corporate professionals who bring to bear over 70 years of combined experience in leading successful organisations across Africa and South Africa.

Thoko Mokgosi-Mwantembe is currently the chief executive officer of the Kutana Investment Group. She is the former CEO of Hewlett-Packard South Africa and Alcatel South Africa. She has worked in senior positions at Siemens Telecommunications, Lucent Technologies and Telkom. She serves as an independent non-executive director on the boards of Vodacom Group, Absa Group and Knorr-Bremse South Africa.

She has also won numerous awards, most notably the businesswoman of the year award in the corporate sector from the Businesswoman's Association and the top individual in Africa in the ICT sector at the African ICT Achievers Awards. In an exclusive Q and A with *Leadership* magazine, Mokgosi-Mwantembe outlines more about the Kutana Investment Group.

Leadership (L): Please give us a brief history of the Kutana Investment Group. When was it established and who founded it?

Thoko Mokgosi-Mwantembe (TMM): Jacqueline Huntley, Janine de Bruyn and myself formed the Kutana Investment Group in 2009, as a reflection of our desire to add a uniquely female

perspective on BEE investments. That is why Kutana is a majority black female owned investment group.

L: As the former CEO of Alcatel and most recently the CEO of Hewlett Packard SA among many other illustrious positions, you have a vast amount of experience in business management. How has this experience contributed to making Kutana a success and how do the skills of the other shareholders or directors compliment yours?

TMM: All of us have operated at the highest levels of the corporate structure and gained enormous amounts of experience in different sectors of the market. We compliment each other completely, and have a significant diverse network. In addition, we are backed up by a quality team of finance and risk professionals dedicated to finding a way to make things happen. Surrounding yourself with like minded, driven, quality individuals has always been the cornerstone of any successful business.

L: As a Pan-African company what are your core values and how do you incorporate these values into your business operations?

TMM: Great question. All companies need a set of values that reflect the people in that organisation and we are no different. We live by our values of knowledge, integrity and growth. Our approach is simple: 'get involved, add value, make a difference, create wealth and opportunity'.

L: What type of businesses does your investment approach mainly focus on?

TMM: We are committed to enhancing the economy and society as a whole. We therefore look to make sound investments in areas that

achieve this while having high growth prospects. Our key focus areas right now are ICT, financial services, energy, industrial/consumer services, property and agriculture. All of these key areas address our commitment and all are important to societies and economies across Africa.

L: Can you shed more light on your investment criteria and investment process?

TMM: It is imperative that we add value to whichever enterprise we are involved in, plus we need to be able to see a return on our investment. So, we look for businesses that have growth prospects supported by a competent management team and we add our experience to support that management team in building the business. After receiving a genuine enquiry we will have a 'get to know you phase', this is vital to establish our shared values and culture for building a long term sustainable relationship. Following that we will carry out the due-diligence and look at the agreements and once all that is complete we focus on growing the company together.

L: What inspired the founding of Kutana?

TMM: Africa, including South Africa, is the continent of opportunities for everyone. We want to bring our outlook on business to a broader base where we can contribute our knowledge, business integrity and ability to grow industries; which are the values upon which we built Kutana. It is truly satisfying to bring success to a wide range of individuals, businesses and their employees and that is inspirational to us.

L: Where is Kutana headed in the future in terms of expanding its investment portfolio?

TMM: We are now in a position to expand our portfolio into Africa having had incredible



success within South Africa. We have over time established good relationships across Africa and have initiated some activities into emerging markets which is very exciting for us, so watch this space.

L: What is Kutana's value add to its investee companies?

TMM: Our value add is to support growth and business development activities by leveraging the strong relationships that we have built over time; bring forth our diverse skills to support the operation as and when required; and support the implementation of a holistic and sustainable B-BBEE programme.

L: What is the main challenge companies in your sector are facing today?

TMM: One of the greatest challenges to companies wishing to expand is how to raise funds, especially in a post-crisis economy. This at the core of our initial value add. Post funding we bring a host of governance, as well as financial experience, allowing senior management to focus on operations. Critically, we know what success looks like.

L: What advice can you give other potential entrepreneurs that want to resign from their current employment to also start up their own companies?

TMM: The initial set-up phase is vital and you will need sufficient funds to carry you through this phase. You need to have an absolute burning passion and desire to succeed in whatever it is that you want to do. Sometimes this means personal sacrifice in the short term. With tenacity, passion and strong financial planning you can succeed. ▲



Kutana Investment Group's CEO Thoko Mokgosi-Mwantembe

Planting the seeds of growth

AFGRI is creating a sound foundation for the agriculture industry

AFGRI was established in 1923 as an agricultural cooperative between farmers in the eastern Transvaal. The cooperative's goal was to protect local grain produce. There were 29 signatories on the original membership list. In 1996, the cooperative (known as the Oos-Transvaalse Landboukoöperasie) listed as a company on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE).

Chris Venter has been involved in the agriculture industry since 2005, when he traded a 14-year career in merchant banking for a position at AFGRI. Chris' banking career included a three-year stint as the New York-based manager of Absa's operations in the United States.

AFGRI provides a number of vital agriculture services to the country's farmers, including grain storage, mechanisation and financial services such as insurance. It is also a notable food producer in its own right, supplying a number of products such as animal feed, poultry and edible oil.

Recently, AFGRI decided to broaden the focus of its business activities.

"We need to focus on creating a sustainable company in the long term. The agricultural environment has changed quite dramatically over the last 10 years and will continue to change due to a number of factors, including global warming," Venter said. As the country's leading agriculture services provider, AFGRI made a decision to improve the sustainability of southern African food production. Consequently, food production and processing were added to AFGRI's business model. In the long term, AFGRI plans to extend its business into other African countries.

Venter's managerial approach is aimed at ensuring AFGRI's future as a sustainable food company. To this end, the company has been significantly streamlined. A large number of non-core businesses have been done away with, while the business has concurrently been expanded into previously untapped markets. "We are very eager to increase the scope of our regional footprint," Venter asserted.

In order to ensure its current success, a lot of effort and dedication was poured into revamping and expanding AFGRI's operations. "A big effort went into ensuring we have the right vision; to be the leading food and agricultural company in Africa. We do everything we can to position our core business correctly and ensure that everybody in the company and the group understands where we are going. Basically, we need to make sure our employees understand the company's goals and ensure consensus about those goals within the organisation." To achieve this goal, AFGRI has spent a significant amount of resources improving communication within the company.

The company has a number of branches in most of South Africa's provinces. Its primary operational centres are Gauteng, North West, Mpumalanga, the Free State and both the Eastern and Western Cape. Apart from its significant South African footprint, the company also operates businesses in Zimbabwe, Zambia and Australia.

AFGRI's general operations comprise of three major areas of activity. Firstly, AFGRI is an agricultural services company. In this capacity, they assist farmers with the tools necessary to improve their production. They provide both retail and mechanisation-related services to the agriculture industry, as well as a renowned grain management service which stores and procures grain for clients.

Secondly, AFGRI helps farmers finance and insure their crops. Farmers can also benefit from AFGRI's foreign exchange management service. But the most recent – and perhaps most exciting – aspect of AFGRI's success is its thriving food processing business. "Food processing allows us to take part in selling the actual commodity that comes from the farm," Venter notes. "This includes quite a large poultry operation. We produce about 800 000 tons of animal feed per annum. We also run a large edible oil business, a soya bean crushing plant and a yellow maize crushing plant."

However all these new and notable achievements have not come about without challenges. "We face a number of challenges," Venter noted. "The global economy is in a precarious state at the moment and I don't believe it has recovered completely yet. Obviously, this has an effect on the local market and has an impact on local demands as well as on the food side."

Venter has initiated AFGRI's new direction ensuring that a common vision is maintained across the company. "We simplified the company to focus on what we believe is our core business and in the process we shifted our mindset to the core business areas. We also managed to expand the business into other regional areas ensuring that we have diversity in the regional footprint of the company."

Venter also noted that a lot of effort and dedication was poured into the expansion and revamping of the company to ensure its success. "A big effort went into making sure that we have the right vision. You know our vision is to be a leading food and agricultural company in Africa and as a result of that we spent a huge amount of effort getting that core business correctly positioned and then obviously making sure that everybody within the

company and within the group understands where we're going."

AFGRI has managed to maintain its leadership position through dedicated and hardworking employees. Venter feels that the employees are one of the company's core assets. "We have very good people working for AFGRI. They are really creative and implement and maintain new ideas. The only way you can really stay ahead of the pack is through making sure you have the right people and that you look after them."

Venter explained that the excellent service provided by AFGRI makes it unique and stronger than any other company providing similar services. "I believe that our strongest point is that we steadfastly provide an excellent service to our customers. I also believe that we are close to the producers and always try to stimulate the production of grain in African countries. Which is quite different to most of the other competitors."

Venter revealed that the company is looking forward to expanding its footprint in Africa and provide even better services to its clients. "We have a specific focus to expand into the African continent, there are various countries that we have expansion strategies in." The company's John Deere agencies spearhead its expansion on the continent, seeking out new prospective expansion regions.

A versatile leader who is optimistic about the future, Venter feels that the company is on a good footing and has built a strong foundation for the future. "If we can continue to roll out this strategy and vision 10 to 15 years from now, the shareholders will really reap the benefit of long term investment, so it's something that we strive for and which I believe is going to start yielding great results soon." ▲



Chris Venter, CEO of Afagri



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In Partnership with



A new breed of entrepreneurs

Kuhumelela is transforming the accounting industry

Kuhumelela is a young, dynamic company that was founded two years ago. The auditing and accounting firm aims to assist with the transformation of the accounting industry. The firm was established by two sisters, Althea and Susan Lapoorta. In a Q&A with *Leadership* magazine, the two sisters outlined their vision for the company's future.

Leadership (L): Why did you choose the name 'Kuhumelela'?

Kuhumelela (K): The word *kuhumelela* comes from the Tsonga (Shangaan) language and it means progressing, or moving forward. We see ourselves as a firm that is progressing and moving forward in the accounting and corporate world.

L: How long have you, Althea and Susan Lapoorta, been involved in the accounting and advisory industry?

K: Both of us are chartered accountants (CAs). We both passed matric with a distinction and received bursaries from SizweNtsalubaGobodo (the biggest black owned audit firm in South Africa), allowing both of us to obtain bachelors degrees (BCom) in accounting and certificates in theory of accounting (CTA) at the University of Stellenbosch.

I (Althea) have 10 years of experience in the accounting and advisory industry. I worked for SizweNtsalubaGobodo in South Africa and was seconded to the United States for four months. I then joined Chevron's internal audit department and performed internal audit assignments in Angola, Kenya, Namibia,

Nigeria, Mauritius, Zambia, South Africa and the United States. I resigned from Chevron to start Kuhumelela in 2010 since I believed there was an opportunity for black-owned businesses in South Africa.

Susan has eight years of experience in the accounting and advisory industry. She worked for SizweNtsalubaGobodo in South Africa and Ernst & Young in Jersey (Channel Islands) before she joined JP Morgan in Bermuda as an Assistant Vice President: Fund Accounting Analyst. JP Morgan provides administration services to various private equity clients.

Her portfolio included clients located in Argentina, Bermuda, Mexico, Singapore, the United Kingdom and the United States of America with the total capital value of these funds ranging from \$200-million (about R1.66-billion) to \$1-billion (roughly R8.34-billion). She resigned from JP Morgan to join Kuhumelela.

We have another sister (Jacqueline) who is also a chartered accountant. She joined the company in April 2012 in order to help us move the business forward.

L: What are the main services Kuhumela provides to its clients? What type of services can a client expect from the company?

K: We provide the following accounting and advisory services: internal auditing, corporate governance, performance management, enterprise risk management (ERM) and assistance to the chief financial officer.

L: As a young black-owned accounting and advisory firm, how have you been doing in an industry dominated by established firms?



Althea Lapoorta

K: It's not been easy since we are competing with firms that have a track record, but through our perseverance and determination we have been given chances and opportunities to prove what we are capable of.

L: What inspired you both to establish the firm and believe you could succeed?

K: We share the same vision, namely that there are plenty of opportunities in South Africa and that we can assist in transforming the accounting industry. There are remarkable black female

leaders who persevered and became CAs under difficult circumstances.

These leaders invested in our education and in us. We believe that if they could persevere and reach their full potential under more difficult circumstances, then the only thing that can stand in the way of becoming successful is our mindset.

There are many opportunities for black CAs in South Africa, but like anything in life you have to go for it – it won't come to you. We also believe that in order to rise you will have to invest in others. For this reason Althea is a member of the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants' (SAICA) transformation sub-committee in the southern region.

L: How do you plan on establishing the firm as a major player in the accounting industry?

K: We believe your values will determine your destiny and the way you do business. Our firm is built on a solid foundation based on the following core values: ethics, trust, integrity and transparency.

We don't compromise on quality and as advisors we add value to any business we are involved in. We work by building relationships and partnerships with like-minded people and firms.

L: The global economy is becoming more difficult by the day due to inflation and unemployment. Has this affected your business?

K: SAICA has approximately 33 167 registered members; 76% of those members are white (25 302) and the remaining 24% is black (7 865).

Based on those statistics, there is definitely a shortage of black chartered accountants in the country, especially if we consider that the country has a population of 50 million.

To be honest, our business was not affected by unemployment, especially due to the fact that there is a shortage of CAs in the country. The demand for CAs still exceeds the supply.

Inflation affects all businesses, but more so our clients. Our biggest asset is our intellectual property and not so much costs that are linked to inflation.

The lack of financial knowledge, transparency, governance and companies struggling to improve their efficiencies and internal control environments has been well documented through the South African media. Until the control environment and culture around controls improves in our country, there will still be a need for consulting firms.

L: What types of companies or clients are ideal for Kuhumelela to do business with?

K: Corporate and governmental institutions in need of accounting, auditing and advisory services. (Internal auditing, corporate governance, performance management, enterprise risk management, turnaround strategies).

L: What sets Kuhumelela apart from other companies in the financial services sector?

K: We come from the corporate world and have worked for large multinational firms. As a result, Kuhumelela knows what these companies expect from advisory firms. They expect a quality product, skills to be transferred to employees in the firm, work to be completed



Susan Lapoorta

on time and timely communication on achieving a project's targets.

L: Would you describe Kuhumelela as a company that seeks to develop a personal relationship with its clients?

K: Definitely. We listen to our clients and provide customised solutions for their needs.

L: Does Kuhumelela plan on expanding in the near future?

K: Yes. Our ultimate goals is to become successful not only in South Africa but also the rest of Africa. ▲

Maersk Line South Africa

It's plain sailing for this core liner shipping business

Maersk Line is the core liner shipping business of the A.P. Møller-Maersk Group (Copenhagen Denmark), and we are dedicated to delivering the highest level of customer-focused and reliable ocean transportation services. Our vision, built from a strong heritage of uprightness, constant care and innovation, has guided our business operations since the first Maersk Line vessel sailed in 1904.

By remaining committed to that vision, we have expanded our business to become the world's largest ocean carrier and have been consistently recognised as the most reliable container shipping company globally. The Maersk Line fleet comprises more than 600 vessels and a number of containers corresponding to more than 3 800 000 TEUs (twenty-foot



David Williams, managing director of Maersk South Africa

equivalent units). This ensures a reliable and comprehensive coverage worldwide.

Maersk Line operates within 125 countries across the world, with nine of those countries forming the southern Africa cluster (South Africa, Mozambique, Namibia, Lesotho, Swaziland, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi). Maersk Line globally employees around 25 000 employees with 16 900 based within the 325 offices across the globe and 7 600 seafarers employed across our fleet of vessels.

Maersk South Africa (Pty) Ltd was established in 1992, with the head office based in Cape Town and branch offices in Port Elizabeth, Durban, East London and Johannesburg.

Our current structure for South Africa has our export customer services (both dry and reefer) based in Cape Town while our import customer service team is centralised in Durban. Our operations and sales teams are based in the above two offices as well as in Port Elizabeth and Johannesburg. To ensure we serve all our customers across southern Africa, we have offices in Namibia (Walvis Bay and Lüderitz) as well as in Mozambique (Maputo, Nacala, Beira and Quelimane) with sales representation in these countries as well as in Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi.

David Williams is the current managing director of Maersk South Africa (Pty) Ltd and head of the southern Africa cluster. The former country manager for the A.P. Møller-Maersk Group in Namibia and previous sales and general manager of Maersk South Africa is the first South African appointed in this capacity.

Williams holds a Bachelor of Commerce degree from Unisa and has been with the A.P. Møller-Maersk Group since 1991. He worked in Safmarine sales and the European Trade department in Johannesburg and Cape Town respectively for six years. In 1997, he moved to Hamburg, Germany as the commercial manager for the Safmarine and Deutsche Afrika Linien

(DAL) joint venture for container services between Europe and southern Africa.

After three years in Germany and the acquisition of Safmarine by the A.P. Møller-Maersk Group in 1999, Williams returned to South Africa in August 2000 as national export manager for Maersk Line, based in Cape Town. In 2002, he was promoted to sales and marketing manager before moving to Walvis Bay to head up Maersk Namibia in August 2004.

Maersk Line's main services out of southern Africa are those to and from the Far East (Safari and M-Express), Middle East (MISA), Northern Europe (SAECS) and the Mediterranean (225). In addition, we offer products to North America (AMEX), Indian Ocean Islands, Intra-Africa and Latin America.

Maersk Line has maintained its leadership position through listening to our customers, retaining dedicated employees and innovation through research and development on our products offered.

The focus of our operations should be on our customers, which is why before embarking on any new projects, we take note of our customers' requirements via the customer panel. Additionally, we run a monthly customer satisfaction survey to ensure we maintain the standards our customers have come to expect of us as well as to gain feedback on which areas we can further improve.

We focus on ensuring our employees are engaged and offer their expertise when assisting our customers to move their cargo across the world.

At Maersk Line, we realise that through innovation, led by a strong focus on research and development, we will be able to offer our customers the best products and equipment to service their needs within the southern African market.

One such example is Quest (quality and energy efficiency in storage and transport) II,

our latest initiative to maintain cargo quality and at the same time reduce carbon dioxide emissions from our reefer containers, globally. It is new software developed to control the refrigeration system on Maersk Line's reefers. Applying Quest II to all Maersk Line's existing and new build reefers assists to improve our clients' carbon footprint from transportation. It is a simple act with high impact. A Quest-enabled reefer with chilled cargo will on average have a reduced CO₂ emission of 30 kilogrammes per day.

With regard to challenges faced, there is constant pressure on profitability. In 2007, we were faced with underperformance (financially) compared to our peers; this led Maersk Line to review our global strategy, enabling us to create the streamLINE strategy that was launched in 2008. This strategy held us in good stead when the financial crisis began; however, the impact on the volumes and ultimately profitability was still felt by Maersk Line.

Over the last few years, there has been constant change within the organisation as we adjust to the economic environment of our own business as well as that of the external economy.

What sets Maersk Line South Africa apart from the rest?

To ensure ease of business for our customers, there are dedicated customer service agents per customer who offer a one point of entry solution, which begins at receipt of booking and extends to documentation requirements, operational issues and invoicing.

In the southern Africa market, Maersk Line has the largest reefer fleet in terms of equipment and vessel capacity; in addition, our expert reefer consultants at the terminals and on board our vessels ensure these containers are monitored 24 hours a day, which equates to longer shelf life and higher market value for your products.

To provide our customers with certainty on their shipments and supply chains, Maersk Line places strong focus on schedule reliability. By ensuring our vessels arrive and depart on time, we enable our customers to plan their supply chains from end to end – thereby eliminating additional costs from their bottom line. This is done with weekly calls as well as securing fixed berthing windows on some of our services.



Sustainability is part of our business in both the environmental performance of our vessels and equipment, or in the interactions we have within the communities we operate. Maersk Line defines sustainability as a business approach that strives for the best possible outcome for our business, the people whose lives we touch, and the natural environment on which we depend – now and in the future.

Within Maersk Line South Africa, we are committed to the objective of employment equity, so as to ensure we make a positive contribution toward this process of transformation. At the start of this year, the employment equity forums have been re-energised and, with added focus to

this initiative, we feel that positive actions will be put in place to further enhance transformation.

Maersk Line partners with various organisations to assist in the development of the communities within which we operate to develop new generations of productive citizens. One such project is the Afrika Tikkun early childhood development (ECD) centre in Mfuleni; this centre provides schooling

for 250 children. It has been proven that children who have the opportunity to attend ECD programmes (from age 0 to 6 years) have a 25% better chance of succeeding at formal schooling that starts at age 7.

As part of this partnership with Afrika Tikkun, Maersk Line employees are able to participate in volunteer days at the centre as well as partake in smaller projects throughout the year, such as on Mandela Day.

A key focus area within our corporate social responsibility portfolio is to increase our economic development projects so as to encourage and assist entrepreneurs to grow their businesses and promote economic equality. ▲

Yakani Group

Stabilising the asset portfolio



Moses Tshitangano, executive director of the Yakani Group

The Yakani Group was founded through the Akanani Platinum transaction in 2007. Yakani has strategic holdings in mineral resources, property development, property investments, in the manufacturing of building and construction material and in the supply chain arena.

Yakani means 'let's build together'. With vision, a passion for potential and working with trusted partners, the Yakani Group has built a sound investment portfolio and a solid reputation as the investment house of choice in southern Africa.

The man at the helm of Yakani is Moses Tshitangano. He is a qualified chartered accountant with significant financial management experience. Tshitangano launched his career at SARS as an assessor. "Subsequent to the completion of my articles at Deloitte & Touche, I remained in Executive Financial Services as a Financial Planning Consultant until 2000. After that, I moved to the Vodacom Group as a Financial Manager."

Tshitangano joined the Yakani Group in 2007 as Group Chief Financial Officer and is currently the Executive Director of the Yakani Group. Tshitangano also sits on the boards of the group's investee companies.

The Yakani Group operates a diverse range of investments and companies in several businesses and industrial sectors. It also offers a number of support investment services to its associated companies.

"The principal nature of the business is that of investing in the building material supply value chain, commercial property investment, residential property development, mineral resources exploration and a management services company, among other business aspects."

The group has several operations across the country. A brick manufacturing concern (African Brick) which is based on the Westrand in Gauteng and another branch in Coega in the Eastern Cape. They also have a paint manufacturing company in Vereeniging.

Reflecting on the present business environment in South Africa, Tshitangano says that, although there have been various difficulties, the company has managed to overcome them. "The doldrums in the construction industry post the FIFA World Cup has put tremendous pressure on liquidity and threatened the going concern of our operational investments in the building material supply sector." Tshitangano also notes that Yakani has struggled with management and superfluous partners' scuffles which added to challenges in an already difficult trading environment.

Stability

Tshitangano seeks to turnaround Yakani's asset portfolio, steering it towards a more profitable and clear cut direction. "Our paint manufacturing concern turnover grew threefold in 2010 but it consequently succumbed to liquidity pressures as a result of low margins and high volume supply contracts. We have since been rescuing the paint business. We have exited some gruesome partnerships and closed hopelessly unsound operations" he noted.

Tshitangano ensured that Yakani rebuilt their balance sheet by exiting some investments. This afforded them an opportunity to sustain other investments. "We delisted African Brick Centre for a private turnaround. Listing was no longer justified with a market cap of just under R21 million. This had the effect of flushing the listing costs out of the system. A necessary resolution which could take us 7 to 9 months to get approved is now capable of being taken on the spot with an

immediate positive impact on the business," he explains.

"We have gotten closer to our investments and we have been quick to identify and address weak links and ticking setbacks." African Brick (under Yakani) now manufactures NFP (Stock brick) and prides itself on its uniquely coloured blue, brown, red and yellow semi face bricks. This product offering has enabled African Brick to broaden its range of products on the market, making it possible to service the plaster brick construction projects, which was not possible in the past.

"We can now produce the NFP competitively and participate in the plaster brick market. We have been rescuing the paint business which will now be a wholly owned subsidiary, from being an associated company with the holding of 30%. This will further broaden our product offering, creating a one stop shop for our customers."

Wide focus

Yakani's offerings cover various strategic sectors such as minerals exploration, building material supply, property development and rental. With such a wide array of sectors to focus on the company has had to adopt compact values. "With the four values of equity capital, trustworthy partnerships, black economic empowerment and good governance underpinning our Investment Promise, we have achieved considerable success, especially in the Akanani Platinum project, with Afriore as a partner, and Boikarabelo project, with Resgen as a partner."

Tshitangano notes that Yakani has been able to improve the lives of many South Africans by providing a reliable service. "We have been able to offer bricks and paint which have built homes for many South Africans. Through owning these industrial capacities, we have been instrumental in creating jobs. We have an opportunity to be part of the solution to the provision of

housing, which remains a sensitive issue for many South Africans."

Corporate vision

Yakani's vision is to build and manage a diversified, sustainable investment company, by 2015, that delivers an adequate dividend flow and above average returns. In order to achieve this goal Tshitangano has had to put an adequate structure in place. "We are working on stabilising our current investment portfolio whilst we refocus the group to mining which has been the core business and the successful business segment to date" he says.

"We will exit non-core investments and diversify future investments into more mature and cash generative business models. We continue to rebuild our balance sheet to enable us to invest in new opportunities like ICT, food and beverages and financial services," he adds.

Tshitangano believes Yakani's sound investment principles, good governance, transparency and dependable partnerships set Yakani apart from the rest, making it unique and strong. He is also proud of the company's BEE credentials.

Looking towards the future, Tshitangano outlines a number of solid plans. "Our current investment portfolio has been funded out of our own equity," he says. "A stable portfolio will allow us additional leverage to grow further through introduction of debt capital, and possibly external equity capital, to fund new investments." He also notes that Yakani will continue creating strategic alliances with reputable mining houses and business links with identified construction companies in order to create a stable market for their building material products and mining projects. ▲

*For more information
 Contact: www.yakani.com*

Training our way to the top



merSETA is dedicated to developing South Africa's industrial skills base

The Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services Sector Education and Training Authority (merSETA) is one of 21 Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) established by the Skills Development Act [no. 96 of 1998]. It facilitates skills development in a number of subsectors. During a Q&A session with *Leadership* magazine, chief executive officer Raymond Patel outlined merSETA's vision and mandate in South Africa.

Leadership (L): When was merSETA established and who founded it?

MerSETA (M): merSETA's mandate comes from an act of Parliament (Act no. 9 of 1998) that created SETAs. SETAs came into operation in the year 2000 after the promulgation of the Schools Development Levies Act.

The SETAs are mandated to train and develop the current workforce and to make provision for the training of new entrants into the workplace. merSETA was created to service five chambers: metal and engineering, auto manufacturing, motor retail and component manufacturing, new tyre manufacturing and the plastics industry.

Currently, merSETA consists of over 40 000 companies and about 600 000 people work in its sector.

L: As the chief executive officer, what is your main mandate at merSETA?

M: merSETA is responsible for the continuous development of those within the sector and preparing a pipeline of the new development of people that come into the sector. There is an emphasis on previously disadvantaged groups who were not exposed to training and development.

There is a social imperative to redress inequalities by uplifting previously disadvantaged individuals and there is also an economic imperative to improve our economy.

of learnership agreements and registration of apprenticeship contracts. The LETQA Unit has to ensure it renders the current legislated services and also participated in debates on the services that would be required by SETAs under the newly established Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO).

The LETQA unit represented merSETA by participating in the initial FET college curriculum review, discussions on the draft policies of the new QCTO, as well as support-

“Our employees are dedicated to skills development and training in South Africa. Their commitment is reflected in the high ratings we receive from our stakeholders.”

L: What are the main services merSETA provides to its clients?

M: merSETA facilitates the process of training through the payment of grants within the five merSETA sectors. The services offered include accreditation and assessor training, assessments and evaluation, the issue and re-issue of certificates, quality assurance, the registration of skills programmes, registration

ing the development of the National Artisan Moderating Body (NAMB). merSETA's working relationship with public FET colleges, tertiary institutions and universities of technology has also expanded dramatically. No less than 12 Institutes of Sectoral or Occupational Excellence (ISOEs) were identified and supported; eight are FET Colleges and one a comprehensive university.



merSETA also facilitated the signing of a collaborative agreement between the eight engineering- and manufacturing-related SETAs with the eight FET Colleges in Gauteng, along with the Gauteng Department of Education. This allows for a coordinated platform to roll out further bilateral agreements in the development of skills, provided by FETs.

In addition, partnerships with the HSRC, the University of Bremen and the University of Witwatersrand (Johannesburg) have been developed and collaborative research ventures with REAL (Research into Employment and Learning) at Wits' Education Policy Unit (EPU) and the Further Education and Training Institute (FETI) at the University of the Western Cape are being explored. merSETA also engaged with UNESCO on the 2012 Global Monitoring Report which explores South Africa's skills development.

L: You are a manufacturing, engineering and related services organisation. How do you cater to such a broad spectrum of portfolios?

M: We focus on increasing the skills available to the sector to meet its short-term needs by investing and encouraging investment and innovative thinking; strengthening the skills pipeline and the medium to long-term supply of skills into the sector; enhancing the capacity of various types of employers in the sector to realise greater returns on training investment to enable employees to benefit from training; empowering beneficiaries and employers to realise greater benefit from training by improving the base and strengthening sector mechanisms for skills planning, implementation and partnerships.

L: Do you have a number of branches in different provinces. How does the company generally operate?

M: The merSETA has seven regional offices catering for all the provinces in South Africa. The effectiveness of our operations lies in constant communication between and within all merSETA units. merSETA's staff is a great contributor to the company's success. They show constant commitment and loyalty to training all South Africans and supporting our economic growth objectives.

“We view industrial tourism as a complementary way of attracting South Africa's youth into industry and apprenticeships. The benefits to companies are manifold.”

L: What challenges have you been facing in the present business environment?

M: We have to build capacity in SETAs, stakeholders, DHET, provinces; agree on model(s) that will achieve our results; embed analysis in the national, provincial and sectoral growth and development priorities and strategies; improve workplace/sector skills plans relationships; coordinate aspects of our data collection and analysis; involve stakeholders properly; work together more as SETAs, especially on inter-sectoral and regional aspects and co-ordinate overlapping mandates.

L: Can you tell us more about your skills development incentives?

M: Government has budgeted more than R800-billion to boost our economy and the SETAs are crucial to facilitating a skilled and capable workforce to support this inclusive growth path. The mind boggles when we talk of this figure, but we need to be clear on what government's intentions are.

This three-year budget will cover the entire economy, including energy, roads, rail, tel-

communications and water. So what does this translate into? This means that R292-billion will be spent on South Africa's energy sector, including Eskom's programmes; R39-billion is earmarked for hospitals and clinics; R226-billion for transport and logistics and R32-billion for education infrastructure.

Looking at these projects, it might seem a tall order. But the education sector is clearly gearing up for the skills needed for these projects. Already, the National Student Fund is supporting ten's of thousands of students in both FET colleges and universities, while merSETA alone supported and trained more than 20 000 people at post-school level. As our Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr

Blade Nzimande has noted, there is a steady growth, albeit still inadequate, in science, engineering, artisan and teacher education. The strategic imperative of all SETAs is to mirror the programmes that government has aimed at securing our long-term economic future. The five key priority areas of education, health, rural development, safety, crime prevention and job creation are all tied to education, skills development and economic activity.

Training is not done by the merSETA itself. Instead, the organisation facilitates the process of training by paying grants, registering moderators and assessors, identifying scarce and critical skills, accrediting training providers, monitoring the quality of training and implementing projects to close the skills gap, as I said earlier.

It is this process that ensures the quality of training in our learnerships and apprenticeships is an enabler for national economic growth. Each learner and apprentice out there is a reflection of the time and expertise of our training providers. merSETA considers two performance dimensions in its approach to boosting skills; that of performance and potential. Both aspects are crucial for entrepreneurship initiatives.

There is high-level debate about whether entrepreneurs are born or trained. Regardless of which side one takes, the fact is that entrepreneurship is vital to economic growth. The will to change for the better and succeed are crucial elements in this epoch-making era.

The creation, research, management and fostering of partnerships between SETAs, higher education and the further education and training sectors are all part of the continuing process of consistency. We are in a globally competitive economy. There are bound to be many highs and lows. All this is part of thought

leadership and entrepreneurship. However, we must consistently strive to be at the forefront of human development as this reflects our highest potential as a nation.

We might have the most mineral resources readily available in one part of the globe, but without the requisite skills and expertise, that wealth is worthless.

L: What do you attribute the merSETA's spectacular success to?

M: It is our dedicated staff. No services can be adequately provided by the merSETA unless its staff is committed and believes in the vision, mission and strategies. We are fortunate because our employees are dedicated to skills development and training in South Africa. Their commitment is reflected in the high ratings we receive from our stakeholders.

L: Do you only operate in South Africa?

M: The merSETA operates primarily in South Africa, but in order to ensure service excellence our research and development unit engages in a range of national and international academic initiatives. These include the delivery of academic papers at the World Association of Co-operative Education in Hong Kong and the World Teaching and Learning Conference in Cairo.

L: What makes the service provided by the merSETA stronger than that provided by any other company in the sector?

M: merSETA employees believe in thought leadership. They galvanise their vision into practical realities and ensure that clients and customers receive the best service. Our turnaround time on queries and applications for training grants is as good as it gets as our staff focuses on doing the right things right the first time.

L: Where is the merSETA headed in the near future in terms of expansion and providing even better services to its clients in South Africa?

M: The FET sector with its 50 colleges and 160 campuses nationally will be the primary site for skills development training. Our key priority for the coming years is to forge linkages with the FETs and universities of technology.

South African industry will have to produce about 30 000 artisans or technicians each year to cope with the rate of economic growth, and the merSETA's focus will be on facilitating the training of these numbers so that decent work and economic fulfilment cascades to all in the country.

L: Any other thoughts and information you feel would be important to point out to your clients about the company?

M: The merSETA's goal is to make artisanship attractive to the country's unemployed youth. We also believe industrial tourism, which is becoming increasingly popular – particularly in Europe – will make artisanship a more attractive option.

From power stations to distilleries, light bulb manufacturing to automobile servicing and maintenance, all sorts of factories and plants are opening their doors to industrial tourists. We view industrial tourism as a complementary way of attracting South Africa's youth into industry and learnerships or apprenticeships.

The benefits to companies are manifold and include attracting new employees, building brand loyalty and increasing the pool of expertise. Our close ties with the FET sector, which is now becoming the fulcrum of training in South Africa, is part of this process. ▲

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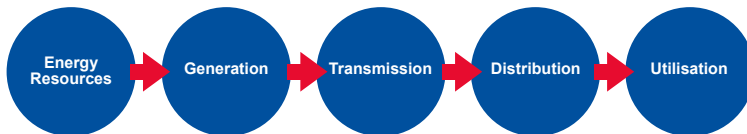
University of Pretoria's New Energy Research Initiative

By Dr Jörg Lalk, Graduate School of Technology Management

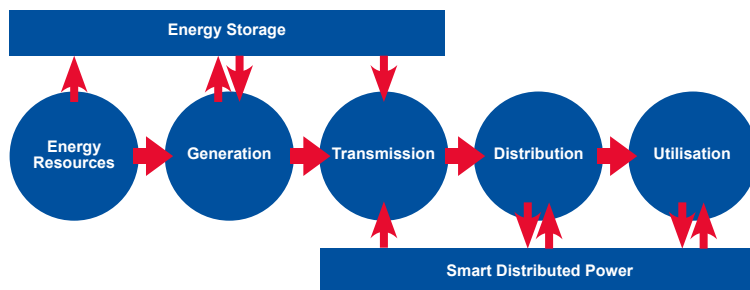
The University of Pretoria has recently embarked on the establishment of a number of key research themes. These are aimed at multi- and trans-disciplinary research cutting across faculties and would further strengthen the university's reputation as one of South Africa's leading research universities. One of these themes is that of Energy and will help to focus the university's research efforts on a number of carefully selected sub-themes relevant to South Africa's future energy security.

In the last year the university has evaluated relevant government policies and strategies pertaining to the wider energy theme in South Africa and concluded that a focused and concerted effort is necessary to ensure that the country is successful in bringing the goals of the Integrated Resource Plan, generally referred to as the IRP2010, to fruition. Speaking as a systems engineer, this means that without a proper "big picture" vision the IRP2010 will just become another fragmented, forgotten and unsuccessful energy strategy.

One of the drivers going forward would be a good understanding of the energy value chain which used to be quite simple, i.e.



With the influences of climate awareness and renewable energy resources this value chain has changed, i.e.



To address these changes effectively while also contributing to the South African government's aims as defined by the latest Integrated Resource Plan the university has concluded that a number of sub-themes in the wider electrical energy theme need to be addressed, namely:

- **Energy production**, with specific emphasis on clean coal, nuclear and of course renewables such as solar and wind.
- **Energy distribution**, where the IRP2010 is relatively silent. Two notable aspects would need to be addressed, namely so-called Smart Grids and Energy Storage. Both these areas will grow in importance as the contribution of renewables with their inherent random availability will impact on the national grid stability.
- **Energy optimisation**, an area where the university is particularly well placed in that it hosts the National Hub on Energy Efficiency and Demand Side Management. Specific areas being researched include thermal and process optimization and energy efficiency.
- **Advanced materials**. In many instances new energy technologies call for unique material attributes, notably in high temperature applications. The university is particularly well positioned for such research thanks to direct spin-offs from research the university did for the defunct pebble bed modular reactor project.
- **Policy, economics and society**. With an ever-increasing complexity of energy technologies it has become mandatory to ensure that chosen energy sources not only fulfill their required energy production goals, but also do so in a sustainable and economic manner. The university is fortunate to host the Graduate School of Technology Management, one of the largest of its kind in the world today, and the only of its kind in South Africa. This school plays an important role in this sub-theme, together with the Faculty of Economic Sciences which is doing sterling work in the area of energy cost modeling for example.
- **Environment**. No argument for sustainable energy can be made without a serious focus on environmental impacts of chosen energy sources. The university is quite active in this field and has made some unique contributions in, for example, the minimisation and management of nuclear waste.

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