

# ZIMBABWE CONSERVATION TASK FORCE



27th June 2009

The ZNSPCA have released the following press statement regarding the elephants being held captive at Sondelani Ranch.

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## **ZNSPCA PRESS STATEMENT ON WILD CAPTURED ELEPHANTS HELD CAPTIVE AT SONDELANI RANCH**

ZNSPCA are pleased to inform the international community that the ten wild elephants captured by Basil Steyn for commercial purposes are scheduled for release.

ZNSPCA would like to thank the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Honourable Minister Nhema, the Attorney General's offices, officials from the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources and National Parks and Wildlife Management Authority for their integral role in the release of these abused elephants. We are proud of our Ministry's recognition of animal cruelty and the prevention of such acts.

Furthermore, ZNSPCA extends its gratitude to elephant specialists Karen Trendler and Dr. Lucy Bates whose reports clearly indicated that these elephants had been subjected to cruelty. We acknowledge the role of Dr. A. Dube (BVSc Zim) who carried out the veterinary inspection of the

elephants. These specialists' opinions, and the ZNSPCA Inspectorate reports have paved the way for a brighter future for these elephants.

This cruel capture resulted in ZNSPCA having numerous meetings with National Parks and it has been agreed that Parks will organise workshops with relevant stakeholders in order to address loopholes and prevent such incidents re-occurring in the Country. Controls and codes of conduct for the management of the remaining wild elephants in captivity will also be put in place. ZNSPCA commends National Parks on this positive move.

These ten elephants will require rehabilitation before they are released. Following advice on ownership issues from legal experts, the elephants will be released from the boma into Sondelani Ranch estate. ZNSPCA Inspectorate will be approaching relevant experts to assist with the rehabilitation of the ten elephants. ZNSPCA requires that all ten elephants be micro chipped before they are released in order to protect them in the future, that they may be traced any time. The public will be kept apprised of our progress.

Assistance was given by numerous other individuals throughout this challenging journey that the ZNSPCA had to take on behalf of these elephants, and we thank them all.

Glynis Vaughan  
Chief Inspector  
ZNSPCA