

## PRESS RELEASE

# Umbabat becomes a proud signatory of the Cooperative Agreement.

*Kruger National Park, Skukuza. 05.11.18*

Today marks a historic day in the life of the Greater Kruger. After three years of meetings, workshops and intense negotiations, the Greater Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Areas (GLTFCA) Cooperative Agreement has been signed. Signatories include SANParks / Kruger National Park (KNP) and the neighbouring protected areas that form part of the Greater Kruger open system.

Fences were dropped between Kruger and some neighbouring areas in the late 1990's and the enlarged conservation space brought significant ecological benefits for the landscape as a whole. However, tensions arose due to different role-players implementing conflicting approaches to managing water, waste, tourism, hunting and wildlife security, to name but a few issues.

The GLTFCA Cooperative Agreement directly addresses this problem by laying down a common governance framework to guide all aspects of protected area management, including ensuring that conservation benefits communities living closest to protected areas.

However, the Agreement is not just a set of rules, norms and standards. It is rapidly becoming an instrument and platform to foster communication, cooperation and a common sense of purpose amongst role-players, such as government, communities and the private sector. Within the Umbabat,



*Theo van Wyk, Lenny Willson and Bryan Havemann signing the GLTFCA Cooperative Agreement*

we already reap the benefits of being part of the Agreement, as we better cooperate with our neighbours to protect endangered species, such as rhino.

The Umbabat owes a great debt to Theo van Wyk (Chairperson), Lenny Willson (Vice-chairperson) and Bryan Havemann (Warden) who represented Umbabat at different stages during the last three years as the Agreement took shape. Their persistence, enthusiasm and “big picture” thinking were crucial ingredients that helped shape the Agreement process.



*Theo van Wyk (UPNR Chairman) says a vote of thanks*

Now that all the formalities of the signing process are over, the real work begins.

“Today we gained 360 000 hectares for conservation” said Theo Van Wyk after signing the agreement. “We have a shared, collective responsibility now to make protected areas relevant to the whole of society. The Umbabat sits right in the heart of the Greater Kruger, and we believe the value of the area will continue to grow, not just for our members, but also for those outside the protected area.”

Mr. Glen Phillips, Managing Executive of Kruger National Park, summarised the mood at the signing ceremony aptly with a final slide that read: “A legacy of hope for generations to come!”

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