

MEDIA RELEASE - 22 March 2002

Wild Dog to Marakele National Park

Marakele National Park in the Waterberg Mountains in the western part of Limpopo Province has been identified by the Wild Dog Action Group as an important area for the future conservation of the endangered African Wild Dog (Painted Wolf) *Lycaon Pictus*. A pack has been identified and the final stage of the relocation to Marakele is planned for the 27th and 28th of March 2002.



Five males originally caught wild elsewhere in Limpopo Province and held in the bomas at Pilanesberg Provincial Game Reserve were placed for holding in the elephant boma at Marakele National Park late last year. The North West Parks and Tourism Board have also donated 2 females originally obtained from Botswana. The De Wildt Cheetah and Wildlife Centre have kept these dogs since shortly after their arrival from Botswana and have given an extra female for the Marakele project.

On Wednesday 27 March SANParks will together with de Wildt capture the 3 females at De Wildt's holding facility and transport them to the newly built predator boma (sponsored by Marakele Parks (Pty) Ltd) in Marakele National Park. The following morning, Thursday 28th, the 5 males will be captured and translocated to the new predator boma to form a new and complete pack for release, which will happen later this year.

The general public will, not have access to the predator boma, to prevent human habituation. The impending release is expected to add to the allure of the park and return a former super predator to the ecosystem. This is the first time wild dogs have been relocated to a South African National Park, a move which represents an important step in the conservation of the country's natural heritage.

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