

WORLD'S LARGEST RHINO GEOGLYPH



CONTRIBUTE TO THE RESTORATION OF THE AFRICAN WILDERNESS

■ COULD THIS BE THE WORLD'S LARGEST RHINO GEOGLYPH IN THE WORLD?

Previously the largest animal imprint on earth was located in the Peruvian desert, but we expect the record to be broken thanks to the Shared Universe and their creation of the biggest single animal drawing (geoglyph) of a rhino that can be seen from the sky when flying on a commercial aircraft.

Geoglyphs or biomorphs (animal shapes) are highly creative and artistic designs, lines, and geometrical etchings or motifs that are created by utilizing rocks, trees, gravel or other elements of the landscape. Geoglyphs are found throughout the world with many being thousands of years old. Thus, far no one knows why they were made nor for what purpose. Many theories abound from being mere decorations to offerings to the Gods, to even signs from extraterrestrials.

The most famous are the ancient Nazca Lines in Peru, which features a grouping of over 300 geometric figures, 70 animals and plant all of which covers hundreds of miles in total. The beautiful monkey from the Nazca Lines in Peru measures 93 m (310 ft) by 58 m (190 ft) and the infamous stylized pelican measures 285 meters tall (935 ft). Their work remained largely unknown until researchers in airplanes re-'discovered' the drawings in the 1930's. Although smaller than their counterparts, the Cerro Unitas, crafted on the hills of Chile, contains thousands of geoglyphs and biomorphs and are believed to be created between 1000 and 1400 CE. The famous Uffington White Horse in Oxfordshire, England is around 110 meters tall and thought to be 3000 years old.

■ 'SKY RHINO'

Now joining the group of geoglyphs is our recently created giant rhino, which is larger than any single animal depiction in the world visible from the sky.

When one flies from South Africa over the air navigation beacon when crossing the Limpopo River that marks the border with Zimbabwe and Botswana, one can see from 10 or 12 kilometers high on a regularly clear day the 'Sky Rhino.' It measures 1,280 meters (over 12 football fields wide) by 680 meters tall and covers an area of 54 hectares in the northern region of South Africa at the Mapesu Private Game Reserve.



Shape	Polygon Type
Coordinates points	286
Area Size	54 Hectares
Length	1.28 km
Height	680 meters
Perimeter/ length	5.4 km
Center coordinates	-22.2646341, 29.4906406



Actual image from a plane

■ CREATION OF THE 'SKY RHINO' AND SETTING A RECORD

The 'Sky Rhino', we hope, will enter into the Guinness Book of Records as the largest animal geoglyph on earth that is visible from the sky. **It was created by many volunteers as a symbol of defiance and to generate attention to the perilous situation of the rhino.**

There are less than 25,000 rhinos left in the world. The fact that there more rhinos poached than those being born means that extinction is possible within 20 years. Over 80% of them roam in South Africa, where both government rangers in National Parks and private anti-poaching units in private game reserves fight a heroic battle against poachers. The poachers intend to make a quick fortune as ground rhino horn in Asian Traditional Medicine has a per kilo value higher than gold, especially in Vietnam and China.

The deforestation project that created the 'Sky Rhino' is part of a larger effort to reduce mopane encroachment (caused from years of overgrazing by domesticated cattle) via restoring some of the area to its original fertile grasslands. The 'Sky Rhino' encloses a sea of yellow grass (*Panicum Maximum*) while on the exterior stands a bountiful ocean of green, brown and grey mopane trees. The grassy plains feed antelopes, zebra, wildebeest and soon a couple of white rhinos from our Rescue Rhino Project, which especially love this type of grass.

■ THE DEMISE OF THE RHINO IN THE REGION

Unfortunately, the white rhino and many other species have been absent from this area from around 1860 to 1890 with the settlement of the Voortrekkers (Afrikaans and Dutch pioneers). They quickly eliminated all wild animals, which at the time were considered useless and competed with cattle farming. At one time there would have been thousands of majestic rhinos and other animals in the area. In addition, human encroachment continues to reduce the available habitat year after year. The explosive population growth of Africa coupled with rapid development and a higher standard of living resulting in decreased space for animals to roam. To make their plight even more difficult, the devastating damage of poaching have warranted immediate intervention.

■ THE RETURN OF THE RHINO AND THE REGENERATION OF LAND

The remaining tracts of land need to be adequately protected and actively managed. The Mapesu Private Game Reserve together with the Mapungubwe National Park forms part of the Greater Mapungubwe Transfrontier Conservation Area (GMTFCA), an initiative that creates a substantial transfrontier park encompassing northern South Africa, Botswana, and Zimbabwe. Roughly about half the size of Kruger Transfrontier Park, this area is not yet widely known in comparison to Kruger; the region has fewer lodges that allows one to observe animals in the naturally rugged expanse without the risk of being overwhelmed in competition with many vehicles around animal sightings.

Thanks to the conservation efforts and deforestation projects by Mapesu, elephants and other species and soon to be released rhinos are again roaming the lands that for over 150 years had not roamed.

Ironically, the rewilding of the lands are less than ten kilometers from Mapungubwe Hill, considered the first place in southern Africa where the forefather's of the present South Africans created its first modern civilization (1075 and 1220 C.A.). Archeologists have discovered that the kingdom was complete with agriculture, grain storage, burial sites and artifacts that point to international trade with regions as far as India. The inhabitants lived roughly around the same time the Nazca Indians created their lines in Peru.

After some 150 years of developing their kingdom, the inhabitants believed to have been driven out by severe drought, later settled in Southern Zimbabwe and created the Zimbabwe Kingdom. The pattern of severe drought driving out agricultural endeavors has continued over the years. However, the area is now slowly but surely being regenerated (rewild) to its original use with the form of game reserves and game farms.

Interestingly, the 'famous 'golden rhino' was unearthed on Mapungubwe Hill in 1932. For years it was kept in obscurity in the University of Pretoria and only became renowned worldwide after the demise of Apartheid.

■ PROTECTION BEGINS TO WORK

Promisingly, in South Africa and Botswana, in spite of rampant poaching globally, the numbers of rhinos poaching has slightly decreased in the last two years. However, that does not compensate for the extreme loss nor affect the numbers in the rest of Africa. Although it is an encouraging sign indicating that increased protection efforts are paying off, the poaching totals are still dramatically high and continually at the rate that their extinction is still probable.

There is no quick fix or simple solutions to solving the crisis of the species. However, it is with the constant attention and determination of all alongside the hands-on effort of a dedicated few that rhinos can and will be saved from extinction so that future generations can experience these amazing animals free and in their natural habitat.

■ WHO ARE WE

In an era where wilderness is shrinking due to climate change, water redistribution, agricultural expansion, poaching and other invasive factors those incredible animal encounters are diminishing. We stand perched at the edge of a world where the magnificent creatures that have traveled with us through the ages and form part of humanity's fabric of being are reduced to theme park amusements in zoo's and synthetic wildlife parks.

What is required is urgent conservation philanthropy, particularly from the private sector, in regards to creating or expanding the habitat for wild creatures and protecting them for future generations. It is for that reason that **Shared Universe Ventures Ltd (SUV)**, a Curaçao listed investment fund was formed in 2014.

SUV operates the Mapesu Private Game Reserve consisting of more than 7,200 hectares of mopane bushveld designated to game farming. The reserve forms part of the Limpopo Valley Conservancy and borders on the Mapungubwe National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in northern Limpopo, South Africa. The property also includes the Mopane Bush Lodge, a four-star fully-catered traditional safari lodge with 12 luxury chalets but soon to be 19 (March 2018).

Through endeavors such as volunteer programs, game breeding, professional training facilities and other conservation projects will not only generate financial returns, but will have a real impact on visitors, and minimal impact on nature and animals. In addition, the overall project will have a positive effect on the local community and help to create good work opportunities for over 100 local employees.

Our mission is to rehabilitate degenerated land to once again become prime habitat for native species, and protect critically endangered animals like the rhino giving them a safe and natural space to live and breed, all in a sustainable manner by creating smart tourism facilities that sustain both nature and livelihoods of employees.

Our vision is to become the highest quality conservancy in all of Africa while offering a hands-on, up-close and personal experience to all involved.

We invite you to join the experience and adventure in the world of conservation. To know more about our projects or to find out more about us, contact:

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