



## ANNOUNCEMENT

### TOWARDS FREEDOM

### ELEPHANT CHARLIE RETIREMENT AND EVACUATION FROM THE NATIONAL ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS, PRETORIA

The [EMS Foundation](#) and [Shambala Private Game Reserve](#) have publicly announced their offer to fund the expertise required to guide and prepare Charlie, the bull elephant, in preparation for his evacuation from the [National Zoo in Pretoria](#). Shambala is the best possible location for Charlie. World renowned experts have been appointed, and are on standby to relocate Charlie from the National Zoo to the reserve in Limpopo where he will receive the best possible care and expert support for the remainder of his natural life.

A state-of-the-art release and rehabilitation boma has been designed which caters for Charlie's every need and will provide for a successful slow release into a natural environment. A team of international and locally captive elephant specialists will be on hand to assist with his rehabilitation programme - a process that is expected to take years.

The comprehensive details of this enormous financial commitment, which is supported by elephant experts from around the world, was hand delivered to Minister Barbara Creecy and SANBI on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June 2023.

The Expression of Interest document sets out infinite details of the layers of the commitment offered by the two entities. The document showcases the exciting opportunity offered to Charlie where he can once again live as an elephant should, for the remainder of his life. The submission was made in respect of a publicly advertised invitation by SANBI.

Since December 2020 the EMS Foundation, steadfastly supported by the members of the [Pro Elephant Network](#) (PREN), has been in negotiation with Minister Barbara Creecy and the SANBI Board for the release of Charlie who has lived at the National Zoo for many years.

The EMS Foundation and Shambala Private Game Reserve have offered to relieve SANBI, the South African government and the hard pressed South African tax payer from any further financial obligation towards Charlie's care.

Charlie has been offered the very best possible chance at rehabilitation, to live in a natural protected system and the opportunity of meeting, living and integrating with other elephants, some of whom have been successfully rewilded from a captive situation, if he so chooses.

The EMS Foundation and the Shambala Private Game Reserve would like to take this opportunity to show their immense gratitude to all the many experts who are of the professional view that Charlie should be retired to a natural environment.



Charlie at the Pretoria Zoo 1<sup>st</sup> February 2023 ©EMS Foundation