

Cathy Dreyer appointed new head ranger for Kruger National Park

Cathy Dreyer, currently the conservation manager at Addo Elephant National Park (AENP) in the Eastern Cape, has been appointed the first-ever female head ranger at the Kruger National Park (KNP). She starts her new position on 1 May 2021.



Cathy Dreyer, KNP's first-ever female head ranger

Before moving to Addo, where she is responsible for both terrestrial and marine areas, she was based in the KNP, contributing to the protection and conservation of black rhino in the intensive protection zone (IPZ) of the park.

She coordinated and participated in the implementation of aerial surveillance and was also instrumental in drawing up protection strategies and patrol tactics aimed at protecting black rhino in the KNP. Prior to this, Dreyer was employed by the Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency as the conservation manager for the Great Fish River Nature Reserve, home to one of the key black rhino populations in South Africa.

Dreyer's appointment comes soon after a successful strategy session held in March with stakeholders and employees on preparing a Rhino Implementation Plan aimed at arresting the decline of the rhino population within KNP.



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'No stranger to the challenges'

Managing executive of KNP Gareth Coleman congratulated Dreyer on her new appointment saying, "We are looking forward to welcoming Cathy back to the KNP. She is no stranger to the challenges faced by the ranger corps in conservation management and fighting wildlife crime. She brings with her a wealth of conservation management experience and in conserving rhinos in particular. She has proven herself as a dedicated conservationist and a law enforcement officer."

He added, "SANParks is currently preoccupied with developing effective management strategies to protect our rhino population and to more effectively manage conservation and wildlife crime in the park in general. A turnaround plan – which addresses these and other key security, infrastructure and human capital challenges, is being widely canvassed and consulted upon. Cathy will be key in driving these changes. We know that she will bring new energy, ideas and passion to our dedicated team within the park."

Dreyer expressed her joy at being the successful candidate saying, "I am incredibly humbled by this opportunity, particularly at a time when the Kruger National Park is vigorously and earnestly working on its turnaround plan. Leadership is a privilege and I look forward to working alongside the dedicated, committed and passionate ranger corps and conservation management teams in the park."

Dreyer is replacing Ken Maggs who was with SANParks for nearly four decades and retired.

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