



*Association incorporated under Section 21
Registration Number: 2001/026273/08
P O Box 11116, Bloubaerg, Cape Town 7443, South Africa
Physical Address: 22 Pentz Drive, Table View, 7441
Telephone: +27 21 557 6155 Fax: +27 21 557 8804
Email address: info@sanccob.co.za Website: www.sanccob.co.za*

MEDIA RELEASE

For more information please contact:

Venessa Strauss, CEO of SANCCOB. Tel: +27 21 557 6155; Mobile: +27 82 325 4638; Email: venessa@sanccob.co.za
Christina Pretorius, IFAW SA. Tel: +27 21 424 2086; Mobile: +27 82 330 2558; Email: cpretorius@ifaw.org

First Release of Rescued Orphaned African Penguin Chicks (Cape Town, South Africa – 25 November 2008)

Less than a month ago, 62 orphaned African penguin chicks have been rescued from starving to death. Today, the first 14 chicks were ready to be released back into the wild. A total of 49 abandoned chicks have been rescued by CapeNature officials from Dyer Island, and another 13 starving chicks from Robben Island.

The chicks that were released today, were the oldest chicks admitted to SANCCOB a month ago. During the last 4 weeks, the chicks have been hand-reared by SANCCOB's dedicated volunteers and staff. The chicks were fed a special fish formula twice a day, fish twice a day and electrolyte fluids three times a day. The penguin chicks have lost all their fluffy downy feathers and have grown into chubby fledglings that are ready to fend for themselves in the wild. SANCCOB's veterinary team has evaluated the blood, weight and feather condition of each bird and they have been deemed fit and ready to go!

The birds were fed one last time at SANCCOB and banded with a permanent ring on the left flipper to enable scientists to monitor the survival of the birds. Each bird was marked with a temporary pink dye on the chest, loaded in special transport boxes and driven by road to Kleinbaai. The birds endured a 20 minute boat ride before they were set free onto Dyer Island. The group of newly released penguins huddled together for a little while, before they dashed into the sea for their first "open-water" swim!

Research published in 2008 by Professor Barham of the Bristol University, confirmed that these birds that are hand-reared and released into the wild has a significant impact on conserving the wild population of African penguins. Rescuing, rearing and releasing the orphaned chicks is an important tool to bolster the dwindling African penguin population.

SANCCOB has joined hands with other major conservation role players to address the catastrophic decline in African penguins by initiating the **Chick Bolstering Project**. Other partners include Bristol Zoo Gardens, IFAW, ADU at the University of Cape Town, CapeNature, Dyer Island Conservation Trust and Marine and Coastal Management.

Board of Directors: *S Steward (Chairman), C McClelland (Treasurer), Adv. M Edmunds, A Moldan, S Ozinsky, Prof. L Underhill, Dr. C Nxomani, Dr. S Petersen, V Strauss (CEO).*

SANCCOB completely relies on the help of the public to continue their work to save the African penguin. If you would like to help cover the costs of rearing the remaining 45 chicks in SANCCOB's care, you can Adopt a Penguin chick for a loved one for Christmas, please visit our website www.sanccob.co.za or contact 021 – 557 6155.

**SANCCOB is proudly supported by:
The International Fund for Animal Welfare**



E N D.

Board of Directors: *S Steward (Chairman), C McClelland (Treasurer), Adv. M Edmunds, A Moldan, S Ozinsky, Prof. L Underhill, Dr. C Nxomani, Dr. S Petersen, V Strauss (CEO).*