**media release**

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For Immediate release

BMW Group South Africa to donate 20 BMW X3s to selected local NGOs and universities.

* The BMW Plant Rosslyn-built BMW X3s are worth more than R15m
* First car handed to the Rhino Orphanage during a ceremony in Midrand today
* BMW Group South Africa is committed to South Africa and proud to support great causes

**Midrand** – BMW Group South Africa is celebrating the start of production of the BMW X3 in South Africa by donating 20 locally built BMW X3s worth more than R15m to selected educational establishments and NGOs.

The first organisation to receive its BMW X3 20d is The Rhino Orphanage, a Limpopo-based charity dedicated to saving orphaned baby rhinoceroses. Universities and technical colleges selected to receive cars will be announced in due course. All are dedicated to engineering excellence.

BMW Group South Africa has long history of supporting the cause of education in South Africa. More than 1900 children have benefitted from Plant Rosslyn’s Early Learning Centre, and the group has supported 144 schools in various ways. By the end of this year, at Ntsha Peu Primary School in Shoshanguve, BMW Group South Africa will have completed a computer centre, a library and a multi-sports facility.

Providing BMW X3s to engineering facilities at technical colleges and universities is a continuation of this philosophy.

Mr Tim Abbott, CEO of BMW Group South Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa said BMW Group South Africa had “started production on the BMW X3, but we are building more than just a car in South Africa”.

“We’re honoured to be able to give back, and donating 20 cars to the right kind of organisation is the continuation of our long-standing commitment to charitable causes.” Mr Abbott said that the NGO partners the company has selected are “organisations as dedicated to South Africa as we have been for the past 45 years”.

Mr Abbott said donating BMW X3s to selected technical colleges and universities was a natural extension of BMW’s long-term support for education in South Africa.

In a ceremony on Thursday, Mr Abbott handed over the keys for a brand-new BMW X3 to the Rhino Orphanage’s founder, Arrie Van Deventer. The Rhino Orphanage will eventually receive two BMW X3s.

The Rhino Orphanage is a registered non-profit company based in the Limpopo Province, and was founded by Mr Van Deventer in 2012. The orphanage is the first specialist, dedicated, non-commercial centre that cares for orphaned and injured baby rhinos with the only aim of releasing them back into the wild. It was created due to a lack of a specialised facilities dedicated to rearing baby rhinos that have been orphaned as a consequence of the current poaching crisis.

The Rhino Orphanage is the world’s first organisation of its kind, and has saved more than 15 rhinos since it was founded.

Mr Van Deventer said the donation was hugely significant for the Rhino Orphanage. “We were thrilled that BMW are interested in what we are doing, and what we’re trying to achieve. The BMW X3 is really ideal for us, as it’s a robust, spacious car with excellent off-road capabilities, which we will use all the time. It’s also really efficient, so will not be expensive for us to run,” Mr Van Deventer said.

Mr Abbott said BMW Group South Africa was excited to “support the protection of South Africa’s extraordinary natural heritage” through the Rhino Orphanage. “It’s just another way we can give back,” Mr Abbott concluded.

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**The BMW Group**

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**In 2017, the BMW Group sold over 2,463,500 passenger vehicles and more than 164,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2017 was approximately €10.655 billion on revenues amounting to €97.8 billion. As of 31 December 2017, the BMW Group had a workforce of 129,932 employees.**

**The success of the BMW Group has always been based on long-term thinking and responsible action. The company has therefore established ecological and social sustainability throughout the value chain, comprehensive product responsibility and a clear commitment to conserving resources as an integral part of its strategy.**

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