Figure 2. Relationship between CC estimates made by experts and model-predicted CC, and estimates of average male home range sizes. This strong relationship acts as independent confirmation of the general appropriateness of the carrying-capacity model.

As this is the first comprehensive CC estimation model for black rhino, several prominent workers in black rhino ecology and conservation or browser ecology are to evaluate the model and make suggested improvements. Additional work to refine the model is being funded by the SADC Regional Rhino Programme. This will include improvement of the browse-availability index used in the model, and it will incorporate better data from several of the benchmark sites where other workers have recently completed more detailed studies of black rhino. Zimbabwean and Kenyan rhino conservation workers have also indicated they plan to undertake similar research and model building, to cover CC predictions for black rhinos in their areas. In future, we hope to expand the model to cover an even wider range of habitat types.

WILDb rhino database

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A new rhino database, WILDb, has been produced by the SADC programme and is currently being field tested in several rhino areas in Zimbabwe, including populations in government IPZs and conservancies. The database comprises components for use in monitoring and tracking the performance of individual rhino populations both locally and nationally. It is designed so that it can be readily customized for use in different rhino population areas in SADC rhino range states. Anyone interested in obtaining a copy should contact Dr Rob Brett at the above address.

RHINO rewrite: an update

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Since 1991, RHINO Bayesian Mark-Recapture software has been used in an increasing number of populations, to produce annual rhino population estimates (with confidence levels) by analysing sighting data