

4.2 Protected areas for forest elephant need to be established.

5. West African Elephant

Convene a regional arm of the AERSG in West Africa and encourage a re-assessment of the status and distribution of elephant within West Africa.

6. Selous Game Reserve

A full census of the rhino and elephant populations of the Selous was needed urgently (this survey was carried out in October, 1986).

7. Central African Republic

Continue to support rhino and elephant conservation initiatives in the CAR despite recent major reductions in the populations of these species.

8. Other Surveys

Censuses of elephant and rhino populations are especially needed in Tsavo, Lunangwa, Kafue and Runaha/Rungwa.

TRADE PRIORITIES

1. Rhino Horn

1.1 North Yemen. Take action to reduce the demand for rhino horn and, if possible, close down the trade.

1.2 East Asia. Take action to reduce the demand for rhino horn and, if possible, stop the trade in horn.

1.3 Investigate the movement of rhino horn within Africa.

1.4 Investigate the discrepancies between reported declines in rhino populations and the amount of horn appearing in the trade.

1.5 Inform Governments of the value, and potential value, of their rhino populations and so encourage the allocation of more resources to their conservation.

RHINO POACHING IN THE ZAMBEZI VALLEY

Rhino poaching in the Zambezi Valley of Zimbabwe continues at a serious level, with staff of the Zimbabwean Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management (assisted by units of the Police Support Unit) waging what amounts to counter-insurgency warfare against commercial rhino poachers. These poachers enter Zimbabwe from Zambia in groups of 4-6 men, armed with AK47 assault rifles and .375 hunting rifles, with their prime objective being the acquisition of rhino horn. They use sophisticated tactics to avoid capture by the Zimbabwean forces: e.g. anti-tracking, fire-and-movement drill, and co-ordinated operations along the Zambezi river frontage. Since June 1985, 19 poachers have been killed (the inmost recent death occurring in early December, 1986), and a further 10 have been captured. The latter have confirmed, during interrogations, that they carry military type weapons specifically to resist capture.

It is estimated that over 200 rhino have been slaughtered on the Zimbabwean side of the Zambezi since July 1984, and although the rate of loss has decreased in recent months (due partly to reduced densities of rhino along the river frontage), it is likely that poaching activity will increase during the rainy season. Officials of the Zimbabwean Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management are attempting to develop liaison with Zambian officials over the matter (the Zambian Commissioner of Police was recently fully briefed on the problem during a visit to Zimbabwe).

COVER PHOTOGRAPH (by A. Hall-Martin): Joao, a famous tusker of Kruger National Park. His left tusk measured 191 cm from lip to tip, and his right 165 cm; lip circumference of the left was 54 cm, and the right 55 cm. His shoulder height was 348 cm.

2. Ivory

2.1 Encourage the formation of a wildlife division within Interpol or if this is not feasible the formation of an equivalent organisation linking wildlife law enforcement agencies.

2.2 Investigate the internal trade in ivory and ivory products in central Africa (i.e. Zaire, Cameroun, CAR, Congo and Gabon).

2.3 Investigate the internal trade in ivory and ivory products in West Africa (i.e. from Senegal to Niger and Nigeria).

2.4 Continue the development of ivory and elephant population models as aim aid to the interpretation of ivory trade statistics.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Promote the conservation and management of elephant populations in Africa by providing information and advice on:

1. Monitoring elephant populations
2. Management and harvesting
3. Legal and administrative frameworks
4. Law enforcement
5. Ivory trade

The main focus of conservation action for elephants in Africa has been on anti-poaching and on attempts to halt the ivory trade. While these may be the most appropriate actions in some cases there are many circumstances where positive management of elephant, as a valuable aesthetic and economic resource, may be more successful. African Governments and wildlife agencies need to be made more aware of the options available to them.

David Cumming

REFERENCE

VOH RA (1985) In: J. Bandyopadhyay, N. D. Jayal, U. Schoettli and C. Singh (Eds). *India's Environment: Crises and Responses*. Natraj Publishers, Dehra Dun, India. Cited by: M. R. Bhagavan (1986). Halting India's environmental devastation. *Ambio*, 5:52-54.

The Zambezi situation provides clear evidence of the high degree of criminal motivation associated with rhino poaching. Weak law-enforcement, mild penalties for poaching, adherence to traditional game-scouting approaches, and lack of attention to systematic intelligence work must be corrected if there is to be any hope for the survival of rhino in African wildlife areas.

Glen Tatham

AFRICAN RHINO WORKSHOP IN CINCINNATI, OCTOBER 1986

The American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquaria convened a 4-day meeting of rhino specialists (including a number of members of AERSG) in Cincinnati, to discuss the management of small populations of rhino in captive or semi-captive situations. Information was presented on a range of relevant topics, including rhino systematics, genetics, decision analysis, reproductive physiology and health problems. It is intended that the proceedings will be published as a special issue of *Pachyderm*.

The aim of *Pachyderm*, the AERSG Newsletter, is to offer members of the group, and those who share its concerns, brief research papers, news items and opinions on issues directly related to the conservation and management of elephant and rhino in Africa. All readers are invited to submit articles (up to 3 000 words), black and white photographs and graphics for publication; articles may be edited. Material published in *Pachyderm* does not necessarily reflect the views of AERSG, SSC, UCN or any organisation supporting AERSG.

Editors: Raoul du Toit and David Cumming.