
succeed in the short term. The African Rhino Specialist Group believes the preferred fallback option would be to move all the remaining animals to an ex-situ fenced sanctuary outside of Cameroon, where they could be looked after under temporary custodianship, as part of a negotiated bilateral agreement. This option would save the western black

rhinos and give Cameroon more time to raise funds and create the necessary conditions for in-situ rhino conservation that will succeed in future. Once the authorities will have met the required conditions and rhino numbers will have built up in the ex-situ sanctuary, the rhinos could be reintroduced back into Cameroon.

SADC regional program for rhino conservation

Richard H. Emslie

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Dr Rob Brett has been appointed SADC rhino program coordinator and has taken up his position in Harare, Zimbabwe.

Reviews of rhino conservation in SADC range states were undertaken from June to September 2000. A key part of these reviews was to identify and solicit

potential projects for funding by the SADC Regional Program for Rhino Conservation. At a meeting of the SADC rhino program consortium meeting scheduled for 9–10 October 2000, potential projects for funding were to be reviewed and program budgets and activity plans drawn up for the next six-month period.

African rhinos numbering 13,000 for first time since the mid-1980s

compiled by Richard H. Emslie

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White rhino

Southern white rhino (*Ceratotherium simum simum*) numbers have continued to increase to an estimated 10,377 in 1999, up from 8441 in 1997, 7532 in 1995 and 6784 in 1993.

Part of the big increase from 1997 to 1999 is because of the revised Kruger National Park figures that were based on a 15% aerial distance sampling estimate. To err on the side of caution, it was decided to take the lower 95% level as the Kruger population estimate.

All countries with wild white rhinos recorded increasing populations, with the exception of Zambia, which recorded a decline of one. Two white rhinos were seen alive in Mozambique, but whether they are

escapees from Kruger Park in South Africa is unknown.

South Africa remains by far the most important range state, with 94% of the wild population, amounting to 9754 white rhinos; while Zimbabwe (208), Kenya (164) and Namibia (163) conserve most of the remainder. Just over 22% (2319) of the continental total is now privately owned.

Northern white rhinos remain limited to Garamba National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo but have fared better in the second civil war. Surveys have confirmed at least 24 animals existing and quite possibly as many as 7 others. Subsequent information from Dr Kes Smith suggests the true population is towards the higher side of this range.