

Black rhinos (*Diceros bicornis minor*) now back in North Luangwa National Park, Zambia

Elsabe van der Westhuizen

Frankfurt Zoological Society, North Luangwa Conservation Programme
PO Box 450189, Mpika, Zambia
email: 2nlcp@bushmail.net

After an absence of more than 15 years, black rhinos are back in North Luangwa National Park, Zambia. The first 5 animals of a planned founder population of 20 were introduced into a central fenced sanctuary in the park in May 2003 as planned (Kampamba 2003). The reintroduction was a combined effort by the Zambia Wildlife Authority supported by the Frankfurt Zoological Society, and South Africa National Parks, with support from the SADC Regional Programme for Rhino Conservation (RPRC) and other sponsors.

Two male and three female black rhinos from Kruger National Park and Marakele National Park in South Africa spent the first few weeks after arrival in bomas where they were fitted with radio transmitters, introduced to local browse, and inoculated against trypanosomiasis. They were then released into the 55-km² sanctuary. Initial post-release monitoring, conducted from the first day after their release, was predominantly in the form of aerial radiotracking. Data are being entered into the WildB database.

All the animals are doing well, and none have attempted to break out of the sanctuary. The sanctuary is surrounded by a simple, low-cost 4-strand electric fence, which allows relatively free movement of other animals to take place and has proved effective in con-

taining the black rhinos to this central area.

The Zambia Wildlife Authority has provided an additional 30 wildlife police officers to bolster the existing law enforcement force in North Luangwa. Officers who have been attached to a special rhino protection team have received specialized training and are deployed around the sanctuary at all times. The ranger in charge of this team attended the AfrSG training-of-trainers course in rhino monitoring held at Pilanesberg National Park, South Africa, in July 2003 and jointly funded by the US Fish and Wildlife Service's Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Fund and SADC RPRC.

Now that the first phase of the reintroduction has been successful, the next challenge facing this project is to find the additional 15 animals needed to bring the founding population number up to the planned 20 in the near future.

Reference

Kampamba, G.H. 2003. Black rhinos reintroduced to North Luangwa National Park, Zambia. *Pachyderm* 34:94–95.

The Black Rhino Range Expansion Project begins

Pam Sherriffs

Project Communications Manager; email: psherriffs@wwfsa.org.za

The WWF/Ezemvelo-KZN Wildlife Black Rhino Range Expansion Project, which aims to increase numbers of Critically Endangered animals by increasing the land available for their conservation, began in July this year in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. If successful, the project will help reduce pressure on existing

reserves in the province and provide new territory in which the endangered animals can breed and multiply quickly.

First, expressions of interest from potential partners were called for. Potential partners don't need to have been traditionally involved with conservation,