



African and Asian Rhinoceroses – Status, Conservation and Trade

A report from the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) African and Asian Rhino Specialist Groups and TRAFFIC to the CITES Secretariat pursuant to Decisions 13.23-25 taken at the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, and further deliberations at the 53rd and 54th meetings of the Standing Committee

Richard H Emslie^{1,2}, Simon Milledge^{3,1}, Martin Brooks¹, Nico J. van Strien^{2,1} and Holly T. Dublin^{4,1}
(compilers)

¹ IUCN/SSC African Rhino Specialist Group (AfRSG).

² IUCN/SSC Asian Rhino Specialist Group (AsRSG)

³ TRAFFIC

⁴ IUCN/SSC

January 2007

Much of the information on African Rhinos in this document was supplied by African range States and collected at the 8th IUCN/SSC African Rhino Specialist Group (AfRSG) meeting in Swaziland in mid-2006, which was sponsored by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (DEFRA). DEFRA also provided support to the IUCN/SSC AfRSG for the preparation of this report. The IUCN/SSC AfRSG is also grateful for additional partial core support of its work from the International Rhino Foundation, Save the Rhino International, WWF and US Fish & Wildlife Service's Rhino & Tiger Conservation Fund. TRAFFIC is grateful to WWF for their financial support of TRAFFIC's work on this document.

Keryn Adcock, Steven Broad, Tom Milliken and Sabri Zain are thanked for commenting on drafts and improving this document.



1. Introduction

CITES Decision 13.23 (a) calls on the IUCN/SSC's African and Asian Rhino Specialist Groups to share information on the national and continental status of African and Asian rhinoceros species, the legal and illegal trade in rhinoceros and rhinoceros products and their derivatives, incidents of illegal killing of rhinoceroses and rhino conservation management strategies and actions. The 53d and 54th meetings of the CITES Standing Committee also requested additional information on trade issues from TRAFFIC. This document serves as the written summary of information for consideration at CITES CoP14 under Decision 13.25 (a); and includes recommendations (Section 5) for further reporting arrangements on the conservation and trade in African and Asian rhinos thereby satisfying Decision 13.23 (b).

2. African rhinos

2.1 Status and trends

The IUCN/SSC's African Rhino Specialist Group (AfRSG) has met every two years since 1991, and updates the status of African rhinoceroses at these meetings. Data are primarily provided by official range State representatives. The continental statistics on rhino numbers were most recently updated at the 8th meeting of the IUCN/SSC AfRSG held in Swaziland from 27 June to 2 July 2006, with numbers reflecting best population estimates as of 31 December 2005.

Unlike many species, African rhinos are frequently monitored using techniques which provide relatively accurate and precise population estimates. Many rhino populations use ear-notching, which allows all or most rhinos to be individually known, or assessed through the application of *Rhino* Bayesian Mark-Recapture analysis. In several large populations or very large areas where individual-based monitoring is not feasible, aerial or ground distance-based or stratified block count methods are employed. While the status of some populations is less well known, the combination of the approaches above has enabled adequate monitoring of the conservation status of the majority of African rhinos.

Overall numbers of both species of African rhinos in the wild have continued to increase with white rhino (*Ceratotherium simum*) numbers up to an estimated 14,550 and black rhinos (*Diceros bicornis*) up to 3,725. The trends since 1991 are shown in Figures 1 and 2.

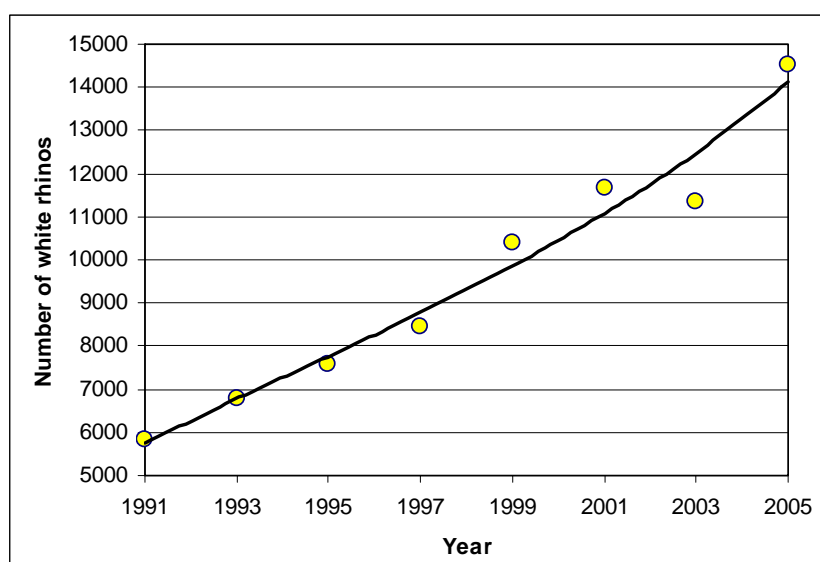


Figure 1 White rhinoceros population trend, 1991-2005 Changes in estimated numbers of white rhino in Africa since 1991 with fitted 3rd order polynomial trendline (IUCN/SSC AfRSG data). The apparent dip in numbers of white rhino from 2001 to 2003 simply reflects sampling error around the estimate for the largest population, i.e. the 2003 estimate was probably at the "low" end due to sampling chance. Estimates for this population are derived using distance sampling along sample aerial transects and the trend is clearly up.

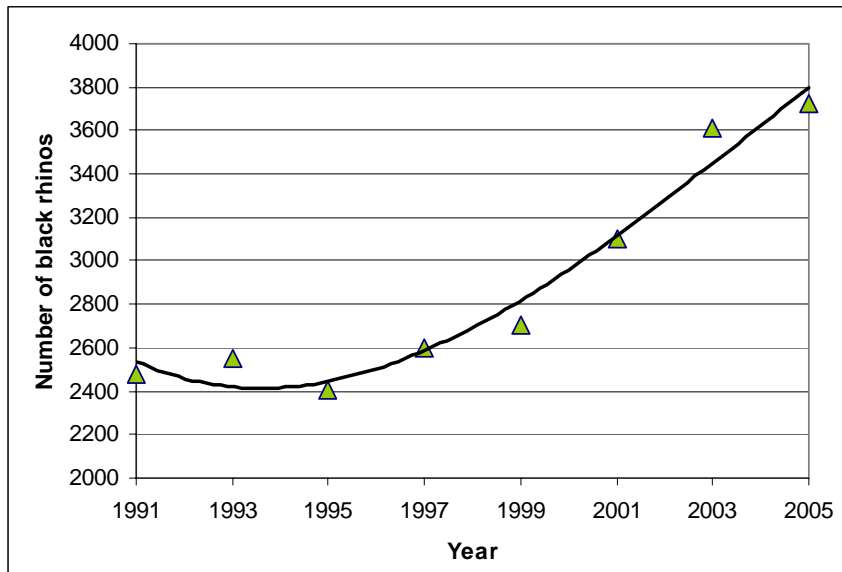


Figure 2 Black rhinoceros population trend, 1991-2005 *Changes in estimated number of black rhino in Africa since December 1991 with fitted third order polynomial trendline (IUCN/SSC AfRSG data). Note how numbers bottomed out in the early 1990s reaching a low of 2,410 in 1995, but have increased since then to reach 3,725 by 31 December 2005.*

Since 1995, white and black rhino numbers have increased by 92 % and 55 % with annual growth rates of 6.8 % and 4.5 % respectively. The lower performance of black rhino is due to the effects of increased density-dependence in some of the larger black rhino populations following periods of low levels of removals and in some cases also increases in densities of potentially competing browsers. Increased attention is now being paid to reducing densities of black rhinos (and possible competing browsers) through increased offtakes in an effort to stimulate underlying growth rates in these populations and create additional new populations with the capacity for rapid growth.

The increase in overall numbers of rhino of both species since 1995 has been mirrored by a corresponding increase in the number of populations rated as *Continentially Key* or *Important* (See Annex 1 for definitions) by the IUCN/SSC AfRSG (see Figures 3 and 4).

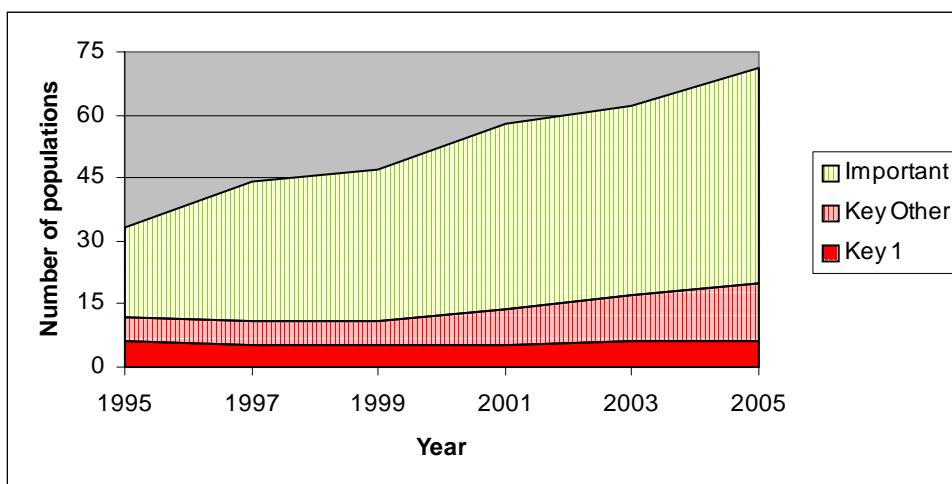


Figure 3 Changes in numbers of IUCN/SSC AfRSG-rated Continentially Key and Important white rhino populations in Africa

There are now 112 *Key* and *Important* populations in Africa, up from only 60 in 1995. While the number of smaller *Important* populations has increased, the number of *Key 1* populations, deemed critical for taxon survival (with either > 50 % of a subspecies or an increasing or stable population of > 100), has barely changed. By the end of 2005, the six white and six black *Key 1*-rated populations conserved

9,273 (63.8 %) and 1,768 (47.5 %) of Africa's white and black rhinos respectively. Overall, **Key** and **Important** populations conserved 81.3 % and 85.9 % of white and black rhino with another 352 white and 74 black rhino populations of lesser importance conserving the rest.

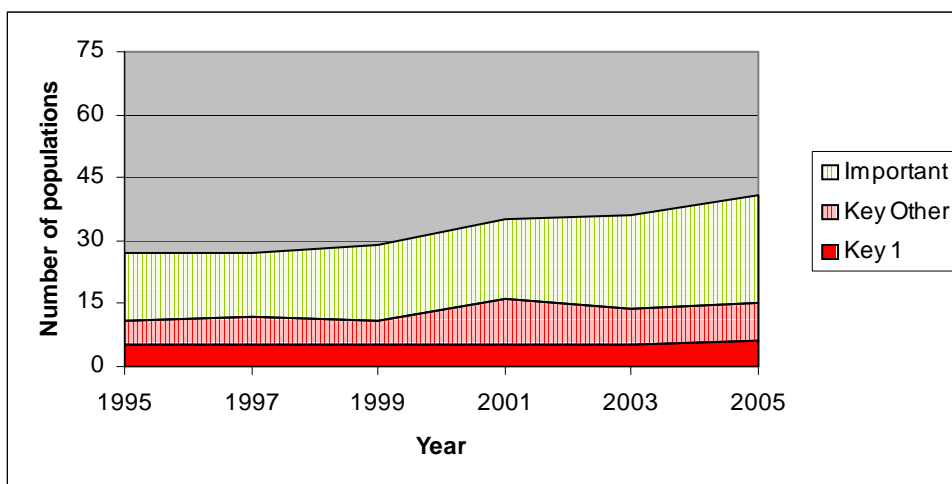


Figure 4 Changes in numbers of IUCN/SSC AfrSG-rated Continentally Key and Important black rhino populations in Africa

The latest numbers of African rhinos by range State are listed in Table 1. Despite the positive trends overall shown by Figures 1-4, poaching and snaring have increased in some range States and one of the six recognized subspecies of African rhino is now likely to be extinct, while another has been reduced to very low numbers and its future is precarious.

Table 1 Numbers of African rhino by country, species and subspecies as of 31 December 2005.

Species	White rhino				Black rhino				Total	Trend
	C.s.cottoni	C.s.simum	Total	Trend	D.b.bicornis	D.b.longipes	D.b.michaeli	D.b.minor		
	(northern)	(southern)			(south-western)	(western)	(eastern)	(southern-central)		
Botswana		99	99	Up+Intro				5	5	Stable
Cameroon						Extinct?			Extinct?	Extinct?
DR Congo	4		4	Down						
Kenya		234	234	Up			540		540	Up
Malawi								10	10	Up
Mozambique		7	7	Down?				?	?	?
Namibia		293	293	Up	1,141				1,141	Up
Rwanda							1		1	Stable
South Africa		13,521	13,521	Up	80		41	1,258	1,379	Up
Swaziland		75	75	Up				16	16	Up
Tanzania							57	44	101	Up
Uganda		4	4	New						
Zambia		2	2	Down				6	6	Up
Zimbabwe		308	308	Up				527	527	Down
Totals	4	14,543	14,550	Up	1,221	0	639	1,866	3,726	Up

Note: The C. s. simum populations in Kenya, Uganda and Zambia are out of range as is the one D. b. michaeli population in South Africa. There have been unconfirmed reports of a few rhino possibly surviving in Ethiopia and the Sudan as well as unconfirmed reports of black rhino from Mozambique but these need to be verified.

Table 1 shows that four range States (Kenya, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe) continue to conserve most black (96.3 %) and white (98.7 %) rhino in Africa. Rhino numbers have increased and new populations have been created in all these except for Zimbabwe where black rhino numbers (but not white rhino) have declined slightly (-1.7 %) since December 2003. Significant field conservation effort (i.e. protection and translocations to maintain productivity of established populations and create additional populations), coupled with political will, have been the primary reasons for continued successes.

Numbers of white rhinos continue to increase in Botswana and Swaziland, and numbers of black rhinos have also increased in Swaziland and the United Republic of Tanzania as well as a small increase in

Malawi. A small white rhino population has been confirmed in Mozambique with a small number of unconfirmed reports of black rhino in the country. Since CITES CoP13 (October 2004), a small population of southern white rhino has been established in Uganda with the creation of a small private sanctuary. Table 1 reflects numbers at 31 December 2005. Since then, an additional 10 founder black rhinos have been translocated to Zambia; the lone female found in Rwanda has died and there are unconfirmed reports of a few rhinos in Ethiopia, the Sudan and possibly another single rhino in Rwanda.

The private sector is playing an increasingly important role in rhino conservation with 27.5 % of Africa's rhinos being either privately owned (4,234) or managed for the State on a custodianship basis (797). Many of these populations are, with a number of exceptions (especially in Zimbabwe which has four **Key** black rhino populations under private custodianship and South Africa which has five privately-owned **Key** white rhino populations) generally smaller than those on State land.

White rhino as a species and southern white rhino at the subspecies level are classified by IUCN's Red List of Threatened Species as *Near-Threatened*. However the northern white rhino is classified as *Threatened – Critically Endangered*. Black rhino as a species and the eastern and southern-central black rhino at the subspecies level are also classified by IUCN as *Threatened – Critically Endangered*. The Southwestern black rhino is however listed as *Threatened – Vulnerable*.

Following surveys over most of its possible range in 2006, the western black rhino *D. b. longipes* in Cameroon is feared extinct as no signs of rhino were found by survey teams, but evidence of general wildlife poaching was widespread. It is feared that this subspecies may now be extinct.

Northern white rhino (*C. s. cottoni*) numbers have declined rapidly since 2003 due to an upsurge in poaching in the only surviving wild population in Garamba National Park, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and surveys have confirmed the presence of only four rhinos.

Table 1 excludes rhinos under more intensive management in zoos and safari parks worldwide. At the 2006 IUCN/SSC AfRSG meeting it was reported that there were 240 black rhino (171 *D. b. michaeli* and 69 *D. b. minor*) and 760 white rhinos (750 *C. s. simum* and 10 *C. s. cottoni*) in captivity, although one of the last remaining 10 Northern white rhinos in captivity has since died.

2.2 Illegal killing

At the continental species level, poaching does not appear to have had a serious impact on overall numbers of rhinos in Africa, with poaching losses in parts of the range surpassed by encouraging growth rates in others. During 2002-2005, an annual average of 56 poached carcasses were detected and reported in Africa. It should be noted, however, that whilst many rhino populations in Africa are well monitored, the likelihood of detecting poached carcasses in some parts of their range is limited by dense vegetation, low patrol coverage and logistical challenges. Poaching data can only be properly interpreted when considered within the context of law enforcement (and hence search) effort and other key factors (such as the accuracy of specific population estimates or by considering the ratio of reported poaching to deaths from other causes). From detected and reported figures, it was apparent that the annual average poaching incidents during 2003 to 2005 represented just 0.2 % of the total number of white rhinos at the end of 2005, and slightly higher at 0.7 % for black rhinos. In the two largest range States, South Africa and Namibia, average annual detected poaching incidents during 2003-2005 represented only 0.1 % and 0.02 % of the respective rhino numbers at the end of 2005.

While poaching levels have not prevented rhino numbers in most countries from increasing, poaching for horn has impacted negatively on certain subspecies in Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Zimbabwe in recent years. In terms of overall numbers, the recent escalation of poaching in Zimbabwe (one of the four major African rhino range States) is of particular concern.

Garamba National Park, a World Heritage Site in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, holds the sole wild population of northern white rhino *Ceratotherium simum cottoni*. Whilst poaching pressure initially increased during civil unrest and war in the late 1990s, good reproduction enabled the population to remain relatively stable. Since 2003, however, poaching escalated and the population declined rapidly with 11 carcasses found in a three-month period between March and May 2004. Confirmed numbers of northern white rhino fell from 30 individuals in April 2003 to just four in August 2005, presenting serious doubts over the longer-term viability of this subspecies. Since African Parks Foundation were contracted

to manage Garamba National Park in late 2005, the indications (e.g. ratio of fresh to old carcasses of elephants and buffalo, and the number of poachers camps recorded in the March 2006 surveys) are that while still volatile, security within the Park has been improved.

In Cameroon, the only known range State for the western black rhino *Diceros bicornis longipes*, no evidence of rhino was found during extensive surveys during the dry season in 2006. The population was estimated at 10 to 13 individuals in 2002, though these were unconfirmed.

Zimbabwe has experienced high poaching levels (for horn) as well as increased snaring (including use of cable snares) associated with land resettlement in some areas. From January 2003 to June 2006, 79 % of 111 recorded black and white rhino mortalities were attributed to poaching and snaring. The increase in poaching and snaring in some Zimbabwe populations has resulted in numbers of black rhino in Zimbabwe declining slightly since 2003, despite some active management to treat snared rhino and moving of some animals affected by human resettlement to safer areas. Fortunately because several Zimbabwean black rhino populations are amongst the best performing in Africa, rapid breeding has largely made up for the increased losses due to poaching and snaring in the country. In addition, in joint Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority/WWF operations, snares have been removed from over 50 rhinos over the last five years, and many rhinos in other vulnerable areas have been translocated. If this had not happened, many of these animals would have died and there would have been a bigger decline in Zimbabwe's rhino population. There is, however, concern that if enhanced security cannot be provided to some populations, numbers may decline further in this major range State.

By way of contrast, poaching accounted for only 1 % of 96 reported black rhino deaths available for analysis from 2002 to 2004 in South Africa, with a further 4.2 % resulting from untargeted snaring of young black rhinos (< 2 years old). From 2002 to 2005, South Africa has also reported the loss of an average of 1.5 black rhinos and 14 white rhinos per year to illegal killing. None of the 54 reported black rhino deaths in Namibia from 2002 to 2004 were due to poaching.

Kenya has also experienced poaching losses in specific populations, although effective metapopulation management has helped ensure that the overall national total has increased.

In summary, poaching for rhino horn remains the main threat to rhinos in Africa, and this has already led to the serious decline of northern white rhino in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the feared extinction of the western black rhino in Cameroon. Further, targeted rhino poaching, and loss or rhinos to collateral and targeted snare injuries is threatening rhino conservation efforts in Zimbabwe, and to a lesser extent in other range States.

2.3 Trade

A review of illegal trade routes and additional information pertaining to poaching dynamics will be provided by TRAFFIC as an information document at CITES CoP14. There is concern that expanding Asian economic involvement in parts of Africa poses a risk that could lead to an expansion of an illegal horn trade in Africa.

For a discussion of the impacts of CITES actions on legal trade and rhinos: see sections 4.2-4.5.

In South Africa, wildlife investigators from at least five provincial conservation agencies, South African National Parks and Organised Crime Units of the South African police have been cooperating together to combat a new threat posed by a group or groups linked to the deaths of at least 19 rhino in South Africa. One apprehended Vietnamese national claimed diplomatic immunity and left the country, and there has recently been another arrest with more expected soon.

Concerns have been raised within the SADC Rhino and Elephant Security Group about insufficient crossborder cooperation between Zimbabwe and South Africa in dealing with cases of rhino horn poaching detected in Zimbabwe with established South African connections. Several investigations still await follow-up from the relevant authorities in South Africa.

To minimize the risk of horn getting into illegal hands in South Africa, a voluntary moratorium on the issuing of permits by provinces for the internal sale of rhino horn in South Africa has been put in place until legislation prohibiting internal sales can be promulgated.

2.4 Major conservation actions and field activities

The very critical status of the northern white rhino (restricted to Garamba National Park in the Democratic Republic of the Congo), following the upsurge in poaching in 2003, resulted in the development of an emergency strategy aimed at providing increased support for the Park and translocating a founder group of five rhinos to a more secure site. An international delegation led by the IUCN/SSC AfRSG held very high-level discussions with Government officials of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in Kinshasa in January 2005, but despite initial support from the President's Office, later complications prevented the signing of the protocol. Subsequently, African Parks Foundation was contracted by the *Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature* (ICCN) to manage Garamba National Park for five years. The IUCN/SSC AfRSG was commissioned to plan a survey, and replicated aerial total counts were undertaken in March 2006. This survey and follow-up work confirmed the presence of the four rhino reported above. A strategic planning workshop is planned for 2007 to determine the best approach for securing the future of this subspecies.

Emphasis is being placed on creating larger viable populations of black rhino as a survival measure. To this end, a founder population of 15 *D. b. minor* has been re-established in North Luangwa National Park in Zambia, through cooperation between the Zambian Wildlife Authority and Frankfurt Zoological Society, and also South African National Parks, North West Parks and Tourism, and the Eastern Cape Parks Board which donated the rhino. In addition, the WWF/Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife's Black Rhino Range Expansion Project has already facilitated the creation of three potentially large and viable black rhino populations in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. A major new custodianship scheme has also been established on a private conservancy in Zimbabwe with 71 rhinos being moved into an area of over 3,000 km² which have already expanded to 94 through reproduction.

Most rhinos currently are concentrated in areas where law enforcement effort is above minimum threshold levels and therefore can be effective. Intelligence gathering and the increased cooperation and sharing of information between undercover wildlife investigators and specialized police units (catalysed by the Southern African Development Community Rhino and Elephant Security Group) are also making a significant contribution to combat poaching by an organized international syndicate in South Africa. 'Scene of the Crime' training courses have been held in eight African range States in an attempt to maximize the chances of catching rhino criminals as well ensuring all evidence collected can be used in court to help secure convictions. However as mentioned above, there is a need for increased cross-border cooperation between authorities in South Africa and Zimbabwe. The management and protection of rhinos is very expensive (up to USD 1,000 per km² per year), and so Parties and NGOs are strongly encouraged to support range States in their rhino conservation activities, which are becoming increasingly difficult to fund.

Since CoP13, there has been an increasing focus on improving biological management of rhino populations for growth; and continued translocations have further increased not only the number of rhinos but the number and spread of populations throughout the continent. However there is still room to improve our knowledge, and hence decision-making about biological management. Capacity building, coordination and work with neighbouring communities also remain important aspects of successful rhino conservation. A major DEFRA-funded Darwin Initiative project in Kenya has also helped build capacity and promoted improved monitoring and biological management. Status reporting in the SADC Rhino Management Group region (Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland and Zimbabwe) continues to guide and inform decision-making on biological management. The successful Italian-funded Phase 1 of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Regional Programme for Rhino Conservation came to an end in September 2005, but has made major contributions towards building capacity and guiding the implementation of rhino conservation in the region. The biennial meetings of the IUCN/SSC AfRSG remain a powerful mechanism for capacity building and compiling information on status, trade and conservation within the African rhino range States.

In Africa, the greatest rhino conservation successes have occurred in stable political and economic situations where governments have demonstrated significant political will, providing sufficient resources to enable dedicated staff to undertake effective field conservation (i.e. protection and management of rhinos to meet demographic and genetic goals – including translocations and the establishment of new populations).

2.5 Management plans and strategies

At the continental level the IUCN/SSC's AfRSG recommends strategies for the successful conservation of African rhinos. Currently Botswana, Kenya, Namibia, South Africa, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe have national rhino strategies and policies. While they are country specific, there are many similarities between the plans and all follow IUCN/SSC AfRSG recommended approaches. Swaziland has also started drafting a strategy and has indicated it will be asking the IUCN/SSC AfRSG for comment.

The IUCN/SSC AfRSG is currently assisting South African members of the SADC Rhino Management Group to update the South African black rhino conservation plan and revise its conservation targets. The revised plans should be completed within the first six months of 2007. Kenya, Namibia and the United Republic of Tanzania have also indicated to the Group that they will shortly be updating their conservation plans and have requested review by the Group.

These national plans tend to be constructed around a logical framework featuring an overall vision and goal with measurable targets which invariably stipulate a minimum underlying metapopulation growth target of at least 5 % per annum. At the next level, these plans usually list a number of key components which are essential to achieving rhino conservation goals such as protection, biological management for growth, monitoring for management, capacity building, coordination and support and sustainability. Each key component has its own objectives and most plans briefly outline the range of activities and recommended strategies needed to meet each objective, as well as listing a number of indicators of progress against each key component objective. Each country coordinates implementation of their plans through one or more rhino committees. These programmes are reported on at the biennial IUCN/SSC AfRSG meetings.

A SADC Regional Strategy has also been developed through the Italian-funded SADC Regional Programme for Rhino Conservation.

An essential ingredient of all successful strategies is the degree to which they are implemented in the field. Sufficient commitment and expenditure from the range State concerned (boosted by additional, targeted donor support) is needed to ensure appropriate field action aiming to minimize illegal killing of rhinos (through protection and use of effective investigation and prosecution techniques) and to grow rhino numbers rapidly (using monitoring to guide biological management for growth). Ensuring political support and budgets is crucial to success, as is ensuring sufficient capacity to undertake necessary conservation actions.

2.6 Coordination and implementation mechanisms

Range States ensure direction and coordination through membership on the IUCN/SSC AfRSG and participation at various regional forums including SADC's Rhino Management Group, Rhino Recovery Group and Rhino and Elephant Security Group. Phase one of the SADC Regional Programme for Rhino Conservation has ended, and the focus of a phase two programme is being discussed, but will most probably concentrate on regional rhino re-establishment activities. An East African Community Rhino Management Group (Kenya, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania) is currently being constituted to enhance the metapopulation management of *D. b. michaeli*. These various groups comprise assemblages of different countries and/or conservation disciplines depending on the countries' needs.

2.7 Horn stockpiles

Based on information supplied to the IUCN/SSC AfRSG meeting by range States, the current rhino horn stockpile in Africa is at least 19,850 kg. The majority (91 %) of the stockpile is State-owned, whilst in terms of origin, 86 % was derived from legal sources (i.e. natural mortality or management-related activities such as dehorning or horn-tipping). Reported government-held stockpiles in Namibia, South Africa and the United Republic of Tanzania have increased since 2004. Kenya and Swaziland have also submitted information on horn stocks to IUCN/SSC AfRSG for the first time. All countries reporting with the exception of Botswana also broke down their stockpile according to whether it was derived from management activities (e.g. natural mortality, dehorning, horn-tipping) or resulted from law enforcement actions (e.g. seizures and confiscations). In most cases, reported stockpiles differentiated between black and white rhino horn, but in some instances black and white rhino horns were pooled.

Some unexplained reductions in reported stockpiles have been recorded between 2004 and 2006 from Botswana and Zimbabwe in terms of the overall quantities and/or composition, but at this stage the reasons for these discrepancies still have to be determined. Although reporting and registration of privately-held horn stocks in South Africa has increased, there are gaps in knowledge regarding some of these stocks. Legislation is being promulgated in South Africa which will make the registration of rhinos and horns compulsory, with failure to register horns a criminal offence. Organised Crime Units of the South African Police also are planning to do an audit of horn stocks in private possession.

In general, however, horn stockpile marking, registration and management has continued to improve through TRAFFIC's on-site support and capacity-building activities, as well as the publication of a document of recommended minimum standards and best practices for rhino horn stock management ('Rhino Horn Stockpile Management: Minimum standards and best practices from east and southern Africa' Simon Milledge, TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa, 2005). Almost all major range States are now using computerized horn stockpile management databases.

Some range State agencies have been routinely using microchips to mark and control their horn stocks as well as inserting them routinely into any animals immobilised for any reason. A software application (MicroTrak) has also been developed to keep track of microchip data and to facilitate determining where recovered rhino products with transponders come from.

2.8 Legislation

Many range States in Africa have mandated jail terms and /or hefty fines for those convicted of poaching, to act as a deterrent. Unfortunately where the option of a fine is prescribed, the stipulated maximum fine after a few years can become insufficient due to inflation or a failure to match changes in the real economic value of rhinos (i.e. price of a live animal). While a number of deterrent sentences (significant fines and or jail terms) have been handed down in some range States, in some instances only small fines, which do not serve as a deterrent, have been handed down. It is also important that, whenever possible, rhino criminals are charged and tried under the acts with the stiffest penalties. The imposition of mandatory sentences (including jail terms) has been questioned by the judiciary in some countries with the result that sentencing is now discretionary in some cases. Current prescribed penalties for rhino poaching in Mozambique only provide for a small fine, and this is a problem that needs to be rectified.

3. Asian rhinos

3.1 Status and trends

The IUCN/SSC Asian Rhino Specialist Group (AsRSG) has attempted to compile the most up-to-date information on the status and trends of the three species of Asian rhinos for the purpose of this report and hopes to update this information following meetings of their South Asian members prior to CoP14. The latest estimates of numbers of Asian rhinos by range State are listed in Table 2.

Table 2 Estimates of numbers of Asian rhino by country, species and subspecies (Jan 2007)

Species	Greater One Horned		Lesser One Horned				Sumatran				
	<i>R.unicornis</i>	Trend	<i>R.s.sondaicus...</i>	<i>R.s.annamiticus</i>	Total	Trend	<i>D.s.sumatrensis</i>	<i>D.s.harrissoni</i>	<i>D.s.lasiotis</i>	Total	Trend
India	2,150	Up							?		
Nepal	413	Down									
Pakistan	2	Stable									
Indonesia			40-50		40-50	Stable/Down?	180-200			180-200	Up
Malaysia							75-90	25-30		100-120	Up?
VietNam				3-5	3-5	Stable?					
Total	~2,565	Stable	40-50	3-5	~50	Stable?	255-290	25-30	?	280-320	Up

A small number of D. s. lasiotis may still survive in Myanmar and/or in East India near the Myanmar border. It is probably unlikely that any rhino still survive in Thailand.

Since CoP13, numbers of greater one-horned rhino (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) have continued to increase in its stronghold of Assam in India. Numbers are up to an estimated 1,852 in Kaziranga, 68 in Orang and 81 in Pabitora, to bring numbers in Assam up to 2,001 by 2006. In West Bengal numbers have also continued to increase and totalled 28 in Gorumara and approximately 100 in Jaldapara by 2005. A translocated population (21 in 2004) also remains in Dudhwa in Uttar Pradesh.

By way of contrast, Nepal's greater one-horned rhino numbers have declined significantly following six years of Maoist insurgency which resulted in the abandonment and destruction of most anti-poaching outposts in the country's rhino parks. Counts in Chitwan NP and surrounding buffer areas indicated numbers had dropped from an estimated 544 in 2000 to 372 by 2005. Much of this decline is due to poaching. In 2000, Bardia National Park had an estimated 67 rhinos living in and around the Park, but in 2005 no census could be carried out due to Maoist activity in the Park. Following the recent settlement, a recent survey in the Karnali floodplain of Bardia National Park in late 2006 counted a minimum of 26 different rhino, and there could well be in the region of 35 still present in this area. However, recent patrols in the Babai Valley area of the Park failed to find a single sign of any rhinos, and it is feared that all the rhinos in this area have been poached. Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve has a small population of six rhinos.

Current estimates of the total number of greater one-horned rhinos in the wild are therefore in the region of 2,540 animals. This species is classified as *Endangered* by IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

It is believed that there are around 300 Sumatran rhino (*Dicerorhinus sumatrensis*) remaining with an estimated 275 in Sumatra (Indonesia) and Peninsular Malaysia and a further 25 in the Malaysian state of Sabah in northern Borneo. Currently, Indonesia holds about two-thirds of the world population of this species. Better protection against poaching, with the continued deployment of mobile Rhino Protection Units (RPU) in the field, has led to stabilization and early recovery in some populations.

In Indonesia, Sumatran rhino occur in only three conservation areas in two provinces of Sumatra – Lampung and Aceh. The largest and best known population occurs in the Bukit Barisan Selatan National Park in Southern Sumatra. Probably up to 80 rhinos survive there and poaching has not been recorded since 2002. The Park is subject to continuing and intensifying encroachment, and has lost about a third of its area already. Though the rhinos are safe from poaching due to the presence of eight RPU, the continuing loss of habitat and intensifying disturbance from the illegal harvesting of timber and other forest products in the remaining habitat is a serious threat to recovery and expansion of the rhino population.

The second largest population occurs in the Gunung Leuser National Park in Aceh province. This population was severely reduced by poaching in the 1980s, but has since recovered through protection by RPU. The size of the rhino population is not very well known, but may be comparable to the Bukit Barisan Selatan population, as large areas of potential habitat have not been surveyed. The rhino habitat in Gunung Leuser is relatively safe from encroachment and disturbance because of its remoteness and inaccessibility. The terrain and conditions however make control of poaching very difficult.

A smaller population survives in Way Kambas National Park in southern Sumatra. The park is isolated from other forest areas and only ca. 40,000 ha of it is suitable for rhino. An estimated 20-30 rhino survive.

Until 2005, rhinos still occurred in the Kerinci Seblat National Park in central Sumatra. While there were possibly several hundred rhinos in Kerinci in 1980, protection using RPU in the key areas was not able to prevent the extinction of the rhino in this park. Even though poaching has effectively been suppressed since 1997, the number of rhino declined, and since early 2005 no signs of rhino have been recorded. The population may have collapsed as a result of poaching in the past which reduced numbers and densities below viable levels.

The rhinos in Peninsula Malaysia are divided over two areas, each with probably about the same number of animals remaining. The largest block of habitat is formed by the Taman Negara NP in the centre of the country. This is the best protected habitat, but the density of rhino is very low, and there are concerns about the long-term viability of this population. The other rhino area is formed by several, more or less contiguous blocks of forest in the north of the country. The overall density appears to be higher than in Taman Negara, but the habitat is fragmented and may soon become even more fragmented because of accelerated development. Also most parts are only classified as Protection Forest. Small numbers of rhinos occur in forest areas in the centre and east of the country. All rhino areas in Peninsula Malaysia have been monitored and protected by RPU and wildlife monitoring units, but the terrain conditions make effective protection against poaching difficult. Moreover there has been a large influx of poachers,

allegedly from neighbouring countries, who enter the forest mainly for sandalwood collection, but also to poach for meat and other valuable commodities.

The Sumatran rhino in Sumatra and Peninsular Malaysia are of the nominative subspecies (*Dicerorhinus sumatrensis sumatrensis*). The Bornean subspecies (*D. s. harrissoni*) survives only in the Malaysian State of Sabah, on the northern tip of the island. Recent surveys in key areas (Tabin and Danum) have indicated rhino numbers slightly above earlier estimates. Future surveys may indicate that the status of this subspecies is not as dire as was reported earlier. The third subspecies (*D. s. lasiotis*) occurred in the northern parts of the historic range (northern Thailand, northern Myanmar and eastern India) and small remnants may survive in remote mountainous regions of these countries. No confirmed specific locations are known and estimates cannot be given.

About 50 Javan rhino (*Rhinoceros sondaicus*) remain in Ujung Kulon in Java (Indonesia) with less than five left in Cat Loc in Viet Nam. The Javan rhino population (*R. s. sondaicus*) in Ujung Kulon is regularly assessed through tracks counts along standard transects. The census results showed a steady increase of about 7 % annually between 1967, when effective protection and monitoring started, and 1980. Since 1980 the population has not increased, but may have declined gradually to the 40-50 now estimated to be present. The apparent limitation of population growth is most likely the result of density-dependent effects. Reproduction is occurring and signs of calves are recorded regularly, but for the last 30 years the number of rhino has declined and the area that they occupy in Ujung Kulon has shrunk.

The small Javan rhino population (*R. s. annamiticus*) in the Cat Loc area of the Cat Tien National Park in Viet Nam occupies an area of only 5,000 ha of suboptimal habitat. The total number is estimated as being between three and five, and no reproduction has been recorded since 1998.

3.2 Illegal killing

From 1980 to 1997, an average of 29 greater one-horned rhino were poached per year in Kaziranga National Park. However since then poaching has been substantially reduced and from 1998-2004 only an average of five rhinos were poached per year. There have been no recent reports of poaching in West Bengal with the last recorded poaching incidents in Gorumara and Jaldapara being in 1992 and 1996, respectively.

The greatest poaching of greater one-horned rhino since CoP13 has been in Nepal and this has been the primary cause of the decline in rhino numbers in that country. Poaching is still continuing in and around Chitwan National Park with 10 rhinos being poached in just six months (July-December 2006). Most rhinos have been poached in buffer zones around the park. Encouragingly, at least seven rhino poachers were arrested in December 2006, with one being apprehended following intelligence provided by the Maoists. Following the political settlement with the Maoists, outposts are now being rebuilt and there are plans to re-establish many of the army's anti-poaching bases in Nepal's parks. Once anti-poaching patrolling improves again, poaching levels should fall.

Although not as rare as the Javan rhino, poaching pressure is more intense on the Sumatran rhino because of its distribution over many small populations in remote and inhospitable habitat. For this reason the Sumatran rhino has been considered by the IUCN/SSC AsRSG to be even more vulnerable to extinction than the rarer Javan rhino. Both these species (and their subspecies) are all classified as *Threatened - Critically Endangered* in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Both species have declined to levels nearing extinction, almost entirely due to poaching for the horn and other parts as well as the loss of habitat for agriculture and settlement. The decline of the Javan rhino started earlier, and in the early 18th century, it was already extinct in large parts of its range and very rare in most places. The Sumatran rhino followed later, probably because it was better protected in its remote mountain habitat, but by 1995, only a few hundred were left, with all populations below 100. Since then stabilization has been achieved by intensive protection in the field, and in some places early signs of recovery are noted.

3.3 Trade

Recent reports of crossborder trade in rhino horn from Nepal to the Tibetan region of China have been obtained from reliable sources. Reportedly, poachers sell the rhino horns they obtain from protected areas in the Terai to middlemen in local towns who then resell them to traders in Kathmandu. The final traders to acquire the horns are ethnic Tibetans who then illegally export them to Tibet Autonomous Region from

where they are moved onwards to Chinese medicinal markets. This general trade pattern is well-developed with respect to a range of wildlife commodities moving between the Indian subcontinent and Tibet AR, including a range of mammal pelts, shahtoosh, and traditional medicinal products such as musk, bear gall bladder and tiger bone.

3.4 Major conservation actions and field activities

Strategic concerns about having “so many eggs in one basket”, and an apparent decline in underlying reproductive performance as population densities have increased in Kaziranga, has resulted in the Assam Forest Department and various interested NGOs agreeing on the implementation of a range expansion project for this species in Assam. This will be achieved through translocations from both Kaziranga and Pabitora (another protected area with an expanding population of rhino that has now exceeded carrying capacity) to other appropriate areas in the State. The goal of the *Indian Rhino Vision 2020* project is to expand the total rhino population in Assam from about 2,000 to 3,000 over the next 15 years and to expand the distribution of rhino so that there are at least six protected areas with rhino populations of at least 50-100 animals each. The translocation of the first founder population to Manas National Park is likely to take place in 2007 or early 2008 once the infrastructure and guard force have been upgraded to the required level.

As discussed above, the continued deployment of mobile Rhino Protection Units (RPUs) in the field in Indonesia and Malaysia has led to stabilization and early recovery in some populations of Sumatran rhinos.

Just as in Africa, the greatest success has occurred where political conditions are stable and there has been significant political will with dedicated staff committed to undertaking effective field conservation (both protection and management – including translocations – to meet demographic goals). Capacity building, coordination and work with neighbouring communities are also all important aspects of successful rhino conservation. Once again this all costs money and so Parties and NGOs are strongly encouraged to support range States in their rhino conservation activities which are becoming increasingly difficult to fund.

3.5 Management plans and strategies

In 2006, the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation of the Government of Nepal developed and published a greater one-horned rhinoceros conservation Action Plan for Nepal (2006-2011). An options study is also underway to inform debate on future management and monitoring programmes for Nepal’s rhinos.

On 28 and 29 February 2006, a workshop was conducted in Jakarta, Indonesia, to review and update the Indonesian Rhino Conservation Strategy of 1993, as well as relevant sections of the IUCN/SSC AsRSG Asian Rhino Conservation Strategy. A draft report has been produced and this is being refined by an Indonesian Rhino Task Force which will oversee and catalyse implementation of the new strategy. The workshop endorsed the long-term goal of restoring populations of both species to at least 1,000 individuals in Indonesia. This will require continued strict protection and safeguarding of significant areas of suitable habitat, including reintroduction into areas where they have been exterminated. Similar efforts are planned for Sabah and Peninsular Malaysia in 2007.

3.6 Coordination and implementation mechanisms

The *Indian Rhino Vision 2020* project will be undertaken by the Assam Forest Department with assistance from WWF India and the International Rhino Foundation.

A planned meeting of South Asian members of the IUCN/SSC AsRSG in Kaziranga in November 2006, which was to focus on the conservation of the greater one-horned rhino, sadly had to be rescheduled for the first week in March 2007 when a tragic helicopter crash in Nepal in September 2006 killed 24 people including a number of senior IUCN/SSC AsRSG members: Dr Tirtha Maskey (Co-Chair of the Group), and the Director General of the Nepal Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation, Narayan Poudel.

As mentioned above, an Indonesian Rhino Task Force will coordinate and catalyse implementation of the revised Indonesian rhino conservation strategy.

3.7 Horn stockpiles

Substantial rhino horn stockpiles are kept in India and Nepal, but no recent inventory is available. A few horns of Sumatran and Javan rhinos, found in the field or confiscated from poachers, are being kept by the Park authorities in Indonesia and Malaysia. Overall, however, there is considerable room for improvement in the management and reporting of rhino horn stockpiles in Asia. The extent of horn stockpiles in previous horn consuming nations is also currently unknown.

3.8 Legislation

Nepal has stiff penalties for poaching and these continue to be applied. For example on 17 December 2006, four rhino horn smugglers were sentenced to 14 years imprisonment and fined NPR 100,000 each.

All range States have legislation that provides full protection to rhino species under the wildlife protection acts. Penalties stipulated in the legislation are high, but convictions are few and often lenient. Capturing rhino poachers and traders, and collecting sufficient evidence for successful convictions, has proved to be very challenging.

4. CITES rhino matters – A report back

4.1 Reporting as called for under CITES Decisions 13.23, 13.24 and 13.25

This document satisfies the requirements of Decision 13.23 and Decision 13.25, paragraph a) (see sections 1 and 5 for further details).

Under Decision 13.24, African and Asian rhino range States were encouraged to support the IUCN/SSC African and Asian Rhino Specialist Groups in collecting and collating the information referred to in Decision 13.23. In Africa, range States greatly assisted the AfRSG by attending the June-July 2006 IUCN/SSC AfRSG meeting and providing detailed written and verbal country reports according to a standard format. Additional information was also provided by African range States to TRAFFIC and the SADC Rhino and Elephant Security Group as well as the SADC Rhino Management Group. Thus African range States, in particular, have implemented Decision 13.24.

In the past, the Asian range State authorities have generously provided the IUCN/SSC AsRSG with verbal and written reports on the status of the rhino populations during the latter's meetings that have been conducted since 1979, and more recent information is expected from AsRSG meetings for Nepal and India (March 2007), Sabah (probably March/April 2007) and Peninsular Malaysia (probably October/November 2007). The Asian range States will therefore partially satisfy Decision 13.24 although updated information from Malaysia will only be available after CoP14.

Decision 13.25 recognized that the IUCN/SSC Rhinoc Specialist Groups operate on a voluntary basis and may be constrained by lack of resources. Parties and other donors were therefore urged to provide support to those groups for undertaking the activities necessary under Decision 13.23. TRAFFIC was also asked for information by the CITES Standing Committee, and the IUCN/SSC Rhino Specialist Groups decided to jointly submit the report required under Decision 13.23 with TRAFFIC input.

The IUCN/SSC AfRSG is very grateful to DEFRA for sponsoring much of the work required to fulfil the overall reporting requirement under Decision 13.23. Much of the information on African rhinos in this update was compiled at the eighth meeting of the IUCN/SSC AfRSG in June-July 2006; with DEFRA also providing support for the IUCN/SSC AfRSG to assist it in compiling this report. TRAFFIC is grateful for support from WWF to undertake their portion of the work in compiling this report.

Despite appeals at the 54th meeting of the CITES Standing Committee, no further funding was received by the AsRSG as requested by Standing Committee and under Decision 13.23, and TRAFFIC did not receive any additional funding for further trade research.

4.2 Downlisting of Swaziland's white rhino to Appendix II for live sale and export of hunting trophies (with quota) as approved at CoP13

Swaziland has sold two young male southern white rhinos to South Africa since CoP13 and funds received were reinvested into conservation management by Swaziland's Big Game Parks. Numbers of white rhinos continue to increase and some additional rhinos were imported into the Swazi metapopulation from South Africa for genetic reasons. No white rhinos have been hunted in Swaziland since CoP13. This was as expected as Big Game Parks, the Management Authority, had previously indicated the provision for hunting had been included to be able to deal with a rogue male killing cows and calves (i.e. in cases where there are no options for exporting a problem animal elsewhere).

4.3 Namibian black rhino male hunting quota (maximum five per annum) approved at CoP13

Resolution Conf. 13.5 (Establishment of export quotas for black rhinoceros hunting trophies) approved the establishment of an annual export quota of five hunting trophies of adult male black rhinoceros from South Africa and five from Namibia.

Because conditions for the equitable allocation of hunting concessions are not in place, Namibia has put a moratorium on the granting of all hunting concessions, including black rhino trophy hunting. As a result, at the time of writing, no black rhinos have been hunted in Namibia. A policy on tourism and wildlife concessions on State land has now been drafted after a public consultation meeting early in 2006, followed by a revision by H.E. the President and further changes following meetings with the Minister. Once this new policy has been approved by cabinet, trophy hunting of black rhino up to the agreed maximum quota of five black rhino per year will proceed.

Namibia has determined that all black rhino trophy hunting will only take place under the guidance of a professional hunter registered with the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET), and he or she will be directly supervised by officials of MET. All black rhinos belong to the State in Namibia, and it has been decided that all revenue from male black rhino hunting is to be reinvested in conservation through Namibia's Game Products Trust Fund.

Namibia's rhino numbers continue to increase and the annual quota represents less than 0.5 % of the population and should, therefore, be sustainable. The limited hunting arrangement under CITES also will assist Namibia in removing specific male rhinos to achieve management objectives.

4.4 South African black rhino male hunting quota (maximum five per annum) approved at CoP13

The application for quotas to hunt a limited number of male black rhinos had been motivated at CoP13 by both Namibia and South Africa as a management option to deal with a variety of problems caused by skewed male biased sex ratios in some breeding problems and specific, usually old adult males.

In 2005 and 2006, South Africa hunted a total of six black rhinos out of a potential maximum quota for the two-year period of 10 animals. In each case the animal hunted had at one time been identified by State conservation agencies as needing to be removed from a breeding population to further conservation management objectives. Of the six hunted, two were old males hunted *in situ* in a State-run park (Pilanesberg National Park), one was an old lone male on a community-owned reserve, and three were hunted on reserves owned by the private sector. Reasons given for one application was that the proposed older male was a behaviourally dominant bull in a small privately-owned breeding population that had not sired a calf for two and a half years. Within 18 months of this bull having being removed, the reserve manager has reported that cows began breeding, and seven of the eight adult females have produced a total of eight calves since his removal. The reason given on the quota application for a second male rhino hunted on the same private population was that a more recent replacement male brought in to add new blood was an extremely aggressive animal that had killed another bull and it was feared it might kill breeding rhino cows. The final permit was granted to a private owner who applied for a hunting permit on the grounds that a lone bull was a vagrant and was breaking fences.

To date, black rhino hunting in South Africa has generated in the region of USD 870,500 averaging USD 145,083 per rhino with a range from USD 95,500 up to USD 230,000. Average prices are unlikely to remain as high in the future as premium prices were probably paid by hunters wishing to

become some of the first to hunt black rhino for many decades. Further, the current inability of American hunters to import black rhino hunting trophies into the United States of America is likely to limit demand. Of this revenue, USD 464,325 (53.34 %) went to State conservation and just over half of this money (USD 235,755) has been set aside specifically for rhino conservation-related activities. A further 9.33 % (USD 81,175) has gone to the Makasa Tribal Authority that owns the Makasa Community Reserve; and at the time of writing the Authority still has to decide how to allocate the balance of funds to further conservation in its reserve which contains a breeding population of white rhino. The balance (an estimated USD 325,000 or 37.33 % of the total revenue) went to the private sector.

At the time of writing, the South African Department of Environment Affairs and Tourism (DEAT) had only issued permits to hunt one rhino in 2007, as other applications they received did not contain all the information needed to properly assess their applicability.

Following concerns expressed by the IUCN/SSC AfRSG, SADC Rhino Management Group (RMG), EKZNW and South African National Parks (SANParks) about the hunting permit approval system, this issue was debated at a SADC RMG meeting held in November 2006. In order to bring the process more in line with IUCN/SSC AfRSG recommendations and to ensure the primary aim of removing specific animals to meet conservation management objectives is at the forefront of any hunting permit application approval decisions, and to minimize the risk of creating perverse incentives for private owners, a number of changes to the system were agreed upon with South Africa's DEAT. As soon as a revised protocol, with associated forms, has been drafted by the IUCN/SSC AfRSG, SADC RMG, EKZNW and SANParks, it will be submitted to DEAT for onward submission for South African government approval. The principal proposed changes include: allocating permits for specific male rhinos in breeding populations of a minimum size; establishing minimum standards in terms of both the size of the area and the time an animal has to be resident in the area prior to hunting should these males be subsequently moved to and hunted on another reserve; using dedicated forms and a graph defining what constitutes a markedly skewed male-biased sex ratio for different sized population sizes to make it easier for provinces to disqualify unsuitable applications; and the independent referral to the SADC RMG by DEAT to ensure that the population applying for a hunting permit has been a willing participant in national metapopulation management and annual status reporting.

As for Namibia, South Africa's black rhino numbers continue to increase and the annual quota represents less than 0.5 % of the population, and should therefore be sustainable. The limited hunting arrangement under CITES also assists South Africa to remove specific male rhino to further conservation management objectives. As detailed above, a significant amount of revenue has also been generated to date with over half of it being channelled back into State conservation agencies.

4.5 Downlisting of South African white rhino to Appendix II at CoP9 in 1994 for the purpose of trade in live animals to appropriate and acceptable destinations and hunting trophies only

Just prior to CoP9, South Africa had an estimated 6,376 southern white rhinos (as of 31 December 1993). Numbers of southern white rhino in South Africa have continued to grow rapidly reaching an estimated 13,521 by 31 December 2005. Numbers of southern white rhinos have, therefore, more than doubled since the downlisting at CoP9 in 1994 with an average net annual increase of around 6.5 % per annum despite the limited sport hunting and the export of rhinos. In South Africa 408 live white rhinos were sold between 2002 and 2004, although the vast majority of these sales have been to local and not international buyers.

Since sport hunting of white rhinos resumed in South Africa in 1968 (when there were only 1,800 southern white rhinos), numbers in the country have increased by over 650 %. The limited sport hunting of 30-70 odd southern white rhinos annually has clearly been sustainable. Provincial conservation officers in South Africa are to accompany hunts from now on and will microchip and measure trophies.

Both live sales of surplus animals (primarily domestic) and continued limited sport hunting have generated significant additional revenue for conservation in South Africa, as well as helping stimulate an internal market for white rhinos which in turn has resulted in more land becoming available for the species. The latter is important as virtually all State-run parks with the potential to have white rhinos currently have

them and unless more new State reserves are created the onus on providing additional habitat for the species in South Africa rests with communities and the private sector.

5. Recommendations, especially regarding Resolution 9.14 (Rev. CoP13) and future reporting

5.1 Proposed amendments to Resolution 9.14 (Rev. CoP13)

As Decisions are only binding until they have been dealt with, and in the light of the improved reporting to CITES through the IUCN/SSC Rhino Specialist Groups it is recommended that Resolution 9.14 (Rev. CoP13) be amended to make such reporting a regular event with the following suggested wording:

The IUCN/SSC African and Asian Rhino Specialist Groups and TRAFFIC are requested to share information on the national and continental conservation status of African and Asian rhinoceros species, the legal and illegal trade in rhinoceros products and their derivatives, incidents of illegal killing of rhinoceroses and management strategies and conservation actions. Range States of African and Asian rhinoceroses are encouraged to support the IUCN/SSC African and Asian Rhino Specialist Groups as well as TRAFFIC in collecting this information. These groups are requested to submit a joint written summary of the information to the CITES Secretariat for consideration at each meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Understanding that the IUCN/SSC Specialist Groups largely operate on a voluntary basis and along with TRAFFIC may be constrained by lack of resources, Parties and other donors are urged to proactively provide core funding support to enable these groups to both function effectively and undertake this reporting.

5.2 Recommended decision on declaration of rhino horn stocks, products and derivatives

It is also recommended that a draft decision be proposed that calls on all CITES Parties to declare officially the status of stocks of rhino horns, products and derivatives, both in State and private ownership, before CoP15, according to a format to be distributed by the CITES Secretariat through a Notification to the Parties in collaboration with IUCN/SSC AfRSG and AsRSG and TRAFFIC.

5.3 Recommended decision on reporting on law enforcement in specific range States where poaching remains a significant threat to rhino numbers, the investigation of horn stockpile discrepancies and the study of horn trade routes

It is recommended that a Decision be proposed that calls upon the CITES Standing Committee, at its 57th meeting, to:

- a) *review an assessment prepared by the CITES Secretariat on law enforcement in the key range States of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nepal and Zimbabwe where illegal poaching of rhino has increased and remains a significant threat to rhinoceros populations, and report the results at CoP15;*
- b) *instruct the CITES Secretariat to prepare a report on the rhino horn stock discrepancies in Botswana and Zimbabwe, and report the results at CoP15; and*
- c) *request TRAFFIC to undertake an analysis and audit of the accumulation (legal and illegal) of rhino horn stocks in range States and the routes by which horns enter and flow to illegal markets, with the priority countries for such analyses being those in which either there has been a significant increase in poaching levels and/or where discrepancies have been detected in reported horn stockpiles or where horn stockpiles are unknown.*

Annex

Definitions of the IUCN/SSC African Rhino Specialist Group 'Key' and 'Important' populations

The continued increase in overall numbers of black and white rhino is reflected in increases in the number of IUCN/SSC AfRSG-rated **Key** and **Important** rhino populations. IUCN/SSC AfRSG-rated populations represent the most critical populations continentally in terms of subspecies conservation, population size and population trend.

- **Key 1** populations contain either > 50 % of a subspecies or have an increasing or stable population greater than 100.

Key other in Figures 3 and 4 refers to the total of Key 2 and Key 3 populations.

- **Key 2** populations contain either 25-50 % of a subspecies or have an increasing or stable population of 51-100 rhinos.
- **Key 3** populations have either a rapidly declining (> 25 %) population of over 100 or a less rapidly declining (< 25 %) population of 51-100.

Important populations – There are four different categories with the majority of **Important** populations (**Important 1**) having an increasing or stable population of 20-50 rhino. Other **Important** population categories are: **Important 2** where the population trend is unknown or decreasing < 25 % (3-5 years) and N=51-100; **Important 3** where the population is decreasing but there are 20-50 in breeding contact in a protected area; and **Important 4** where there is a population of 20+ rhinos dispersed outside or within a protected area with good potential for consolidation in an area that can take at least 20 founders.