

partnerships with landowners within the historic range of the black rhino. The first three partner sites were Mun-ya-wana Game Reserve, Zululand Rhino Reserve and Pongola Game Reserve.

There are now 70 black rhinos on project sites in KwaZulu-Natal, of which 6 are calves born on

the sites. These rhinos comprise approximately 15% of the black rhino population of KwaZulu-Natal. Through the project, black rhinos have been reintroduced onto nearly 70,000 hectares of land so far.

Conservation strategy for black rhinos and management guidelines for white rhinos launched in Kenya

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The third edition of ‘Management strategy for the black rhino in Kenya and management guidelines for the white rhino in Kenya, 2007–2011’ was launched on 31 October 2007 at Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) headquarters in Nairobi. The occasion was presided over by the chair of KWS Board of Trustees and attended by a multitude of rhino stakeholders including donors, conservation organizations, the private sector, local communities, the diplomatic corps, IUCN, and the African and Asian Rhino Reintroduction and Veterinary Specialist Groups.

This five-year rhino conservation and management strategy was developed at a rhino stakeholders’ workshop in February 2007. A draft document was circulated to other stakeholders including the African Rhino Specialist Group for comments and input before its ratification by the KWS Board of Trustees. The process aimed at ensuring that KWS continues to make the most appropriate strategic approaches in managing, making decisions and using its resources, in line with its 2005–2010 strategic plan. Figure 1 presents facets of the strategy graphically.

During the next few years, Kenya will move into a new phase of black rhino conservation. This third edition of its management strategy and guidelines retains the vision of conserving in situ at least 2000 black rhinos in Kenya. It includes revised goals and strategic objectives, and it emphasizes the 2007–2011

strategy period as the turning point in significantly increasing black rhino numbers. The current goal for the eastern black rhino in Kenya is to maintain a minimum growth rate of 6% per annum in established sanctuaries, achieve a minimum population of 150 black rhinos in free-ranging areas, and realize population growth of a minimum of 20 rhinos in montane forest areas—all aimed at achieving 700 black rhinos by 2011.

The long-range vision of 2000 black rhinos cannot be achieved within fenced areas alone and therefore the remaining still-extensive range and intact habitats in Tsavo, Meru and northern Kenya will need to be secured and made available over the next five years to enable the planned translocation of black rhinos from sanctuaries that have attained ecological or social carrying capacity. With sound science, effective protection, and monitoring and community engagement, this should be possible. Aiming towards this goal, the KWS Board of Trustees approved implementing an intensive protection zone (IPZ) in Tsavo West National Park, where black rhinos will be translocated in 2008. Land held by individuals, local communities and authorities will continue to play an important role as breeding reservoirs to complement the official black rhino conservation areas, particularly the IPZ.

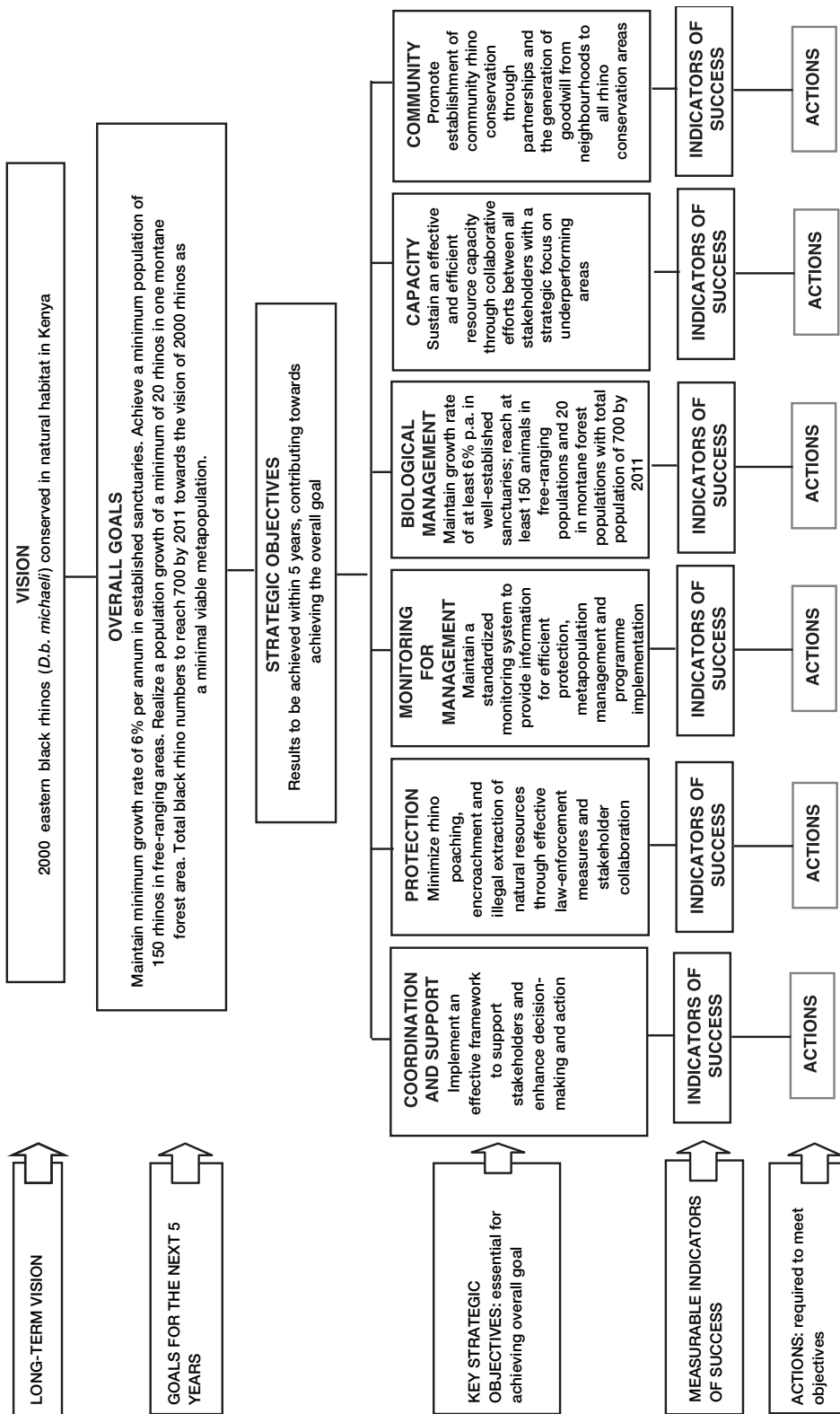


Figure 1. Kenya black rhino conservation and management strategy for the eastern black rhino in Kenya, 2007–2011.

Successful implementation of the strategy will require training staff at all levels, from rangers through middle-level managers and scientists to senior staff involved in policymaking. KWS and other stakeholders are committed to greater capacity building in all aspects of rhino conservation.

Rhino management and conservation will not only consider the entire rhino population but will also focus on different habitats; the strategy therefore emphasizes directing extra effort towards overcoming the problems of monitoring populations in montane forest areas.

Regional cooperation in conserving the eastern black rhino will also be considered. In addition to working closely with Kenyan stakeholders, KWS

is initiating regional cooperation to increase rhino numbers. This initiative is being explored through a proposal seeking to establish an East African Rhino Management Group to set protocols for managing and exchanging eastern black rhinos within East Africa.

Rhino stakeholders in Kenya have also recognized that guidelines are needed to manage the southern white rhino, particularly in relation to what commitment of local resources is appropriate for conserving this strictly exotic species, how to handle trophy rhinos and horns, and matters of white rhino movements and ownership. White rhinos in Kenya will be managed as a species for community conservation, education and tourism and as a conservation resource for restocking white rhino ranges outside of Kenya.