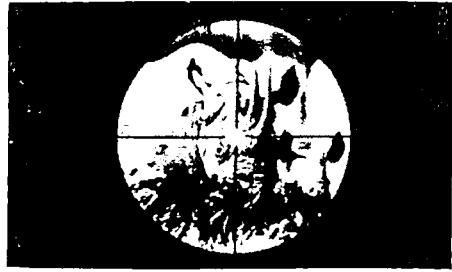


RHINOS

This special report on the present status of the rhino and the action being taken to save it from extinction

has been prepared by SWARA from information supplied to us by Dr Kes Hillman, Chairman of the IUCN/SSC African Rhino Group.



The Survival Service Commission (SSC) of the International Union for the Conservation of Species (IUCN) exists 'to prevent the extinction of species, sub-species and populations and to maintain genetic diversity'.

Not surprisingly the rhino fits into the category which concerns the SSC which is organised in specialist groups, each of which concentrates on a particular endangered species and aims to gather information and identify what needs to be done to ensure its conservation.

The New York Zoological Society is funding Dr Hillman as Chairman of the IUCN/SSC African Rhino Group to carry out a survey of the numbers, status and distribution of rhinos throughout Africa; and together with the Governments and knowledgeable individuals in each country, to put to IUCN a plan of action for improving the status of rhinos—or in some cases simply save them from extinction!

This effort is being backed up by a world-wide campaign to raise money and public awareness of the problems of rhinos. This campaign is being run by the World Wildlife Fund and other organisations.

The headquarters of the African Rhino Group is in Nairobi and uses premises kindly provided by the African Wildlife Leadership Foundation and secretarial services funded by the East African Wild Life Society.

In Kenya, a large number of people recognised the need for action to save rhinos some time ago, and working groups of concerned individuals from both the Wildlife Conservation and Management Department of the Government and from various conservation organisations have gathered information, formulated a strategy for rhino conservation and are now raising funds and creating awareness to back up the Government's field action.

The situation varies in the rest of Africa; but information is gathered largely from people with knowledge of rhinos and of the conservation needs in the various countries concerned; many of them are asked to serve as members of the IUCN African Rhino Group. Questionnaires, published data, correspondence and wherever possible personal visits, provide the basis of information. Part time field studies in association with translocations and the testing of aerial techniques for the census of rhinos maintain a perspective on the situation.



Camerapix

Translocation of rhinos in the 1960's was funded by the East African Wild Life Society and the World Wildlife Fund.

Latest news from Kenya's Rhino Action Group (KRAG).

The Kenya Rhino Action Group wishes to thank the many supporters who have sent their donation to help save Kenya's rhinos.

The Action Group has been able to finance maintenance on the capture helicopter (£5,000), to support an anti-poaching force on a ranch which sustains a large number of rhino (£1,000), maintain radio equipment (£1,250) and support rhino capture operations.

Rhino Translocations

To date 7 rhinos have been successfully captured from the Laikipia area. Of these, one adult male had a snare cut so deeply into his neck that he died two days later despite all veterinary efforts. The remainder were held in holding pens at Muringato until 29th February. They include a female and female calf, a sub-adult male and 3 adult males. On 29th February an adult male and the sub-adult were brought down to the holding pens in Nairobi National Park. The sub-adult (*Lopeyo*) is still there, but the adult, (*Ngotho*) despite being the first

caught and by far the tamest broke out into the Park. His tracks have been seen a few times since, in the area close to the pens.

Nairobi National Park

An old (as judged from the teeth) adult female died of natural causes. There were signs of fighting with another rhino. She appears to be one of the rhinos released into the Park in 1968. The horns have been recovered by the Department.

A new baby rhino was born 3-4 weeks ago.

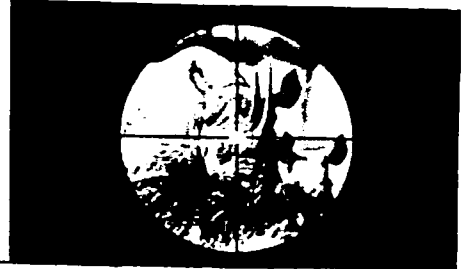
Funding

The KRAG are funding equipment for the new camel anti-poaching unit at Meru, anti-poaching forces in Laikipia, beaters for rhino capture operations and may be buying a second-hand winch for the capture unit.

Your valued contributions will help ensure the future of rhinos in Kenya. Please assist in saving a species and send all you can to

Rhino Project, Box 24603,
Nairobi, Kenya.

NOW!



Rhinos in Africa now: a country by country report.

Angola: Rhinos probably number in the 100's and are almost certainly decreasing. The amount of traffic of rhino horns across the border indicates a relatively substantial population but very little is known. A visit by a Portuguese-speaking representative is being negotiated.

Botswana: Fifty Southern White Rhinos, which were introduced into Chobe National Park, are apparently thriving. Few, if any, Black Rhinos remain in the country.

Cameroun: There are Black Rhinos in the 10's or possibly low 100's in the north. They have been protected from hunting since November, 1974, but as the Minister for Agriculture, M. Awunts, notes this is not sufficient to safeguard them and the habitat must be considered as well.

Central African Republic: A minimum estimate of 1000 Black Rhinos has been given by Spinage with possibly considerably more. Less than 50% are in protected areas. Northern White Rhinos probably exist in the country but little is known about them and there are no conservation areas within their probable range.

Chad: Very few Black and no White Rhinos remain.

Ethiopia: A few Black Rhinos were seen during 1979 in the region of the proposed Omo National Park. None are known from elsewhere in the country.

Kenya: A large proportion of the remaining 1500 (or less) are in the more forested areas. The policies being employed for their conservation centre on increased anti-poaching and consolidation of existing conserved areas; some translocation is being carried out of those individual rhinos in completely unviable situations to safer sanctuaries. Stricter controls of illicit trade and programmes of education and research have been introduced to back up these policies.

Malawi: Bell estimates between 20 and 50 Black Rhinos, most of them in Kasungu National Park. Law enforcement is reasonably effective and the commercial value of horn is less than in East Africa so rhino have perhaps been increasing here in recent years.

Mozambique: A few hundred Black Rhinos occur in the north of the country. Some of this area is

proposed as a National Park and a survey has been requested.

Namibia: This country is estimated to contain about 190 Black Rhinos. Of these approximately 150 in Etosha National Park are increasing; but the rest in Kaokoland and Damara-land are declining rapidly under large-scale poaching. There are approximately 150 White Rhinos in Waterburg Plateau Park and the population is stable.

Rwanda: There are between 20 and 40 Black Rhinos in Akagera National Park. This population has developed from 6 introduced in 1958, under good protection. The main threat at present is that of inbreeding; the introduction of a few more individuals is being investigated.

Somalia: Black Rhinos occur in the south of the country, apparently under little poaching pressure, but details await the result of a survey.

South Africa: Approximately 480 Black Rhinos exist in South African Parks, Reserves and private ranches and they are increasing. 68% of these are in the Hluhluwe/Mfiflozi corridor complex. The populations in Hluhluwe and Mkuzi Reserves are apparently not increasing; the reasons for this are uncertain but some habitat limiting factors have been suggested. Some Black Rhinos have been successfully re-introduced to Kruger National Park and further re-introductions are planned.

Southern White Rhinos have been increasing by 8-10% per annum in South Africa and have been supplied to many zoos and other Reserves. Owen-Smith estimates the present population at 2,200, largely in Natal.

Sudan: This is one of the few areas where Northern White Rhinos remain in reasonable numbers. McClinton estimates between 500 and 600, nowhere at high density; improvement in their conservation status is badly needed. Much of the present Shambe Game Reserve has been lost to human settlement since people have been driven inland as a result of rising water. It has therefore been suggested that an area close to the Shambe Game Reserve should be developed as a White Rhino sanctuary. Many of the White Rhinos have been poached recently.

There are probably less than 500 Black Rhinos in very sporadic

distribution and decreasing numbers.

Tanzania: There are possibly between 4,000 and 9,000 Black Rhinos, of which at least 3,000 to 4,000 are in the Selous Game Reserve region. In a 1976 aerial census Douglas-Hamilton estimated 2,200 and 2,700 on separate counts and for rhinos such censuses are always low. However, even when these figures are corrected upwards, the density is still less than 0.1 per square kilometre.

In northern Tanzania the Black Rhinos have been hard hit by poaching. In Manyara National Park they have declined from over 60 in 1976 to less than 12 with 2 killed in the last four months. In Tarangire Borner estimates a present population of between 10 and 20 compared with 250 in 1974.

Uganda: Many wildlife species have been hard hit by poaching and the war. Black Rhinos in the low 10's remain in Kidepo National Park. In Kabalega National Park they have been drastically reduced; in an area near Chobe where 14 individuals were known to exist no signs of live rhinos have been seen since February, 1979. But two were seen recently between Paraa and Chobe.

Of the White Rhino introduced to Kabalega 4 have been seen near Paraa. Three White Rhinos (and signs of others) have been seen in Ajai's Sanctuary. Aid in rebuilding the conservation services is the main need in Uganda.

Zaire: No Black Rhinos have been reported from Zaire since 1954. There are still some Northern White Rhinos, mainly in the Garamba National Park and surrounding area. In 1976 an expanding population of 400 was estimated but it is feared that this has declined since then.

Zambia: As a result of the aerial census carried out in September, 1979, we estimate at least 3,500 to 4,500 rhinos in the Luangwa Valley. There are perhaps 350 to 800 rhinos in the rest of the country. Rhinos (and other species) have long been poached for meat in Zambia but commercial poaching is now beginning to take hold. A small but very effective anti-poaching force is being established in the Luangwa Valley funded by the Rhino Campaign.

Zimbabwe (formerly Rhodesia): Numbers of Black Rhinos are probably stable at about 1000.

RHINOS: what next?

What we know and what we must do.



IR J Pickett

This photograph of a rhino was taken a few weeks ago at the world famous 'Treetops' lodge from a new ground floor photographic room just completed. The white scars on the side of the rhino have been made by another rhino's toe-nails!



There are probably between 10,000 and 20,000 Black Rhinos remaining in Africa: everywhere their ranges, densities and overall numbers have been declining since the end of the last century. In Kenya, for example, Black Rhinos were found over 90% of the country in 1900: by 1963 it was down to 50% and today it is less than half that. In some areas the remaining individuals are so scattered that the populations are unviable. Today's total population in Kenya is estimated to be less than 1500—one tenth of what it was ten years ago.



The White or Square-lipped Rhinos of southern Africa were reduced to a single, small relict population before strong protective measures led to such increases that 2,500 have been given to other Reserves and zoos whilst approximately the same number remain. Recently it has even been found necessary to reduce the males (not in demand for translocation) by control shooting.



The northern race of White Rhinos is reduced to relict populations totalling probably less than 1000 individuals scattered through southern Sudan, Uganda, Central African Republic and northern Zaire. They desperately need improved protection.

Half a million dollars has already been raised by the WWF Campaign: but unfortunately this does not go far when fed into the far-flung over-taxed anti-poaching services of the vast African continent. If only the same funds could be applied to the trade routes of rhino products much more might be achieved. This is certainly not an easy task but nevertheless a few steps have been taken in some areas.

A review of the available information from captive rhinos is being made. This will indicate the status of the captive rhino stock and could provide useful information on the possibility of rhino breeding sanctuaries in the future.



The most important long-term hope of reducing the decline in rhinos is to reduce the trade in rhino horn and other products. The nature and extent of the demand for these products, in both the middle and far east, has been studied by Dr Esmond Bradley-Martin and others. Dr Bradley-Martin's report (commissioned by the Survival Service Commission) has been completed and awaits publication by the SSC. Bradley-Martin has also made a number of suggestions on how demand for rhino products can be reduced. (No doubt all conservationists will await publication of both report and suggestions with anxious interest: *Ed.*)



China (one of the main importers of rhino products) has recently signed CITES. This obliges them to cease trade in the 'endangered species' listed in Appendix 1 of CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species). Obviously rhino is listed on Appendix 1 and so this should have a significant effect on the demand for rhino products in China.



The Convention needs to be strengthened and enforced more widely together with more effective policing of the trade in order to control the middleman (without whom the poachers would virtually cease to exist).



Perhaps (writes Kes Hillman hopefully) we shall continue to see rhinos, who in the words of Blaney Percival 'gambol in sheer lightness of heart... and romp like overgrown pigs in the neighbourhood of the drinking place', rather than dying so that one quarter of one percent of their bulk can feed a market in the Yemen or a dusty, scented apothecary's shop in Singapore.

Rhino in the Luangwa Valley, Zambia.



P S M Berry