

RHINOCEROS

WWF/IUCN have joined with African and Asian governments, and with other leading conservation organisations, in an emergency campaign to save the rhinoceros, all five species of which are in grave danger. The two African species, the black rhino and the white rhino, have experienced a dramatic decline in recent years through poaching for illegal trade in rhino horn. In Asia, the Javan, Sumatran and Great Indian rhinoceros are also threatened by poaching and loss of habitat. The previous Yearbook carried reports on the status of rhino in Africa and Asia and on the extent of the international trade in rhinoceros products. A survey of the rhino in Africa has now been completed and several projects have been launched under the Action Plans for conservation of the rhino in both Africa and Asia. Details are given below.

AFRICAN RHINOS

Project 1707

Rhino Survey and
Conservation Programme
WWF GRANT 1980 - \$6,128

Project 1724

Conservation Strategy for
Rhinos (Kenyan Rhino Action
Group - KRAG)
WWF GRANT 1980 - \$8,201

Project 1730

African Rhinoceros Survey
and Conservation
WWF GRANT 1980 - \$31,452

Project 1747

Development and Launch
of Project Rhino
WWF Grant 1980 - \$12,508

Project 1757

Rhino Conservation in
Luangwa Valley National
Park, Zambia
WWF GRANT 1980 - \$210,927

Project 1759

Cameroon - Conservation
of Rhino
WWF GRANT 1980 - \$83

Project 1760

Uganda - Conservation
of Rhino in Ajai Sanctuary
WWF GRANT 1980 - \$5,102

Project 1773

Rhino/Elephant Aerial
Survey, Uganda
WWF GRANT 1980 - \$14,361
(See under Species, Mammals -
General, Wildlife Survey,
Uganda)

Project 1787

Support for Rhino and
Elephant Group Meetings
in Nairobi
WWF GRANT 1980 - \$18,626
(See under Elephant)

Project 1796

Publication of Reports on
International Trade in
Rhino Products
WWF GRANT 1980 - \$3,351

Project 1799

Elephant and Rhino Projects
in Africa
WWF GRANT 1980 - \$7,356

Project 1932

Establishment of a ranger
post in Rubondo National
Park, Tanzania
WWF GRANT 1980 - \$1,936

Project 1936

Rhino Trade Study, Far East
WWF GRANT 1980 - \$5,200

African Rhinoceros Survey and Conservation (Projects 1707, 1730):

Between July 1979 and December 1980 a survey was carried out of the status of rhinos in Africa to determine what could be done to arrest the severe declines that were becoming obvious in some areas and threatening the extinction of whole populations. The survey was funded by the New York Zoological Society, in conjunction with WWF and the IUCN Species Survival Commission African Rhino Group and resulted in an Action Plan for the conservation of African rhinos.

Survey:

The objectives of the survey were:

- To initiate and monitor action for rhino conservation, by promoting the establishment of national working groups to develop and execute rhino conservation in conjunction with international organisations;
- Through the working groups and other sources to survey the distribution, numbers and status of rhinoceros populations in Africa;
- To review conservation and management options for rhinos;
- To pin-point priorities for conservation, research and management;
- To form a co-ordinating secretariat for rhino conservation and research;
- To provide material for education, public awareness at all levels and fund-raising; and
- Together with the TRAFFIC group of IUCN and consultants, to gather information on the commercial trade in rhino products and the consumers in order to assist action to control the trade and possibly to initiate a programme to reduce the demand for rhino horn.

The work was carried out by literature review, correspondence, distribution of questionnaires, survey visits, personal liaison, establishment of working groups, particularly in Kenya and Tanzania, involvement in aerial surveys, testing of aerial methods with my own and other aircraft, development of an active IUCN African Rhino Group, development of an Action Plan and group assessment of the priorities therein, initiation and promotion of rhino associated projects, development and implementation of rhino conservation projects, provision of material and articles for public awareness of the problems, liaison with Governments and other wildlife organisations to promote conservation issues that were identified as necessary, and centralisation of rhino information, contacts and bibliography.

SPECIES, MAMMALS - RHINOCEROS - AFRICA

Africa's Rhino PopulationsBlack rhino (Diceros bicornis)

<u>Country:</u>	<u>Est. Nos.:</u>	<u>Trends:</u>
Angola	100±	decreasing
Botswana	under 20	"
Cameroon	over 100	"
Central African Republic	1000-5000	"
Chad	very few if any	"
Ethiopia	under 20	probably decreasing
Kenya	under 1500	decreasing
Malawi	20-50	stable/increasing
Mozambique	under 400	decreasing
Namibia	c. 190	"
Rwanda	20-40	increasing
Somalia	possibly low hundreds	unknown
Sudan	under 500	decreasing
Tanzania	4000-9000	"
Uganda	low tens	"
Zambia	under 5000	"
Zimbabwe	850-1500	stable/decreasing
South Africa	580+	increasing
Total	14,000-24,000	decreasing

Northern white rhino (Ceratotherium simum cottoni)

<u>Country:</u>	<u>Est Nos.:</u>	<u>Trends:</u>
Central African Republic	probably a few	unknown
Sudan	500-600	decreasing
Uganda	under 5	"
Zaire	under 400	"
Total	under 1000	decreasing

Southern white rhino (Ceratotherium simum simum)

<u>Country:</u>	<u>Est. Nos.:</u>	<u>Trends:</u>
Botswana	50-80	increasing
Kenya	5 (introduced)	
Mozambique	30-60	stable
South Africa	2358+	increasing
Swaziland	60+	"
Zimbabwe	155-165	"
Total	2,600-2,800	increasing

(IUCN/NYZS/WWF African Rhino Survey)

The black rhino with its prehensile upper lip for browsing... Photo: Boulton



*... and the white rhino with its wide mouth for grazing. Both the black rhino and the northern form of the white rhino are being poached to extinction for their horn.
Photo: Schumacher*

SPECIES, MAMMALS - RHINOCEROS - AFRICA

The status and problems of the three main groups of rhino in Africa differ:

The white rhino (Ceratotherium simum) is divided into two geographically and morphologically separate sub-species. The northern race C. s. cottoni is the most endangered and least known of the African rhinos, with possibly only about 1000 individuals remaining and decreasing in each of the four countries. Only those in Garamba National Park in Zaire, a few in Southern National Park in Sudan and a couple in Kabalega National Park exist in any form of conserved area and establishment of a new National Park to protect one of the major remaining populations is therefore a high priority.

The status of the southern race C. s. simum is secured through strong conservation and management. Approximately 2,600 occur in the wild, increasing in four of the five countries in their indigenous range where they occur, although sometimes increase is through introductions. Nearly 2,500 have been translocated. Its needs are for re-distribution into areas of former range and acquisition of new areas of suitable habitat, in order to relieve pressure on existing over-utilised habitats and to ensure survival of the species should anything happen to a main centre of their concentration. Translocation is therefore the major action for this sub-species, and settlement of the controversial issues regarding utilisation of their products.

The black rhino Diceros bicornis is still the most numerous and widely distributed species with between 14,000 and 24,000 in 17 or 18 countries, but has been hardest hit by illegal exploitation for the commercial value of its horn and is decreasing in all but four of the countries where it occurs. Declines of possibly as much as 90% are estimated for a few populations, even in conserved areas. Its biggest needs are for protection through control of poaching and curbing of the trade. This has been the emphasis of projects in Tanzania, Zambia, Uganda, Kenya and the Central African Republic.

Action Plan

A comprehensive Action Plan for the conservation of African rhinos has been drawn up and priorities for action set in conjunction with the Rhino Group. It tackles the following aspects of the problem:

Conservation Areas: Ensuring and strengthening sufficient conserved areas for rhinos and their movement to these areas when necessary.

Protection and Law Enforcement: Consolidation of existing conserved areas and strengthening of anti-poaching and law enforcement work.

SPECIES, MAMMALS - RHINOCEROS - AFRICA

Trade: Assessment of the international trade in rhino products and its impact, identification of means of action to stop it and implementation of this action through CITES and other sources. This is the highest priority issue for achieving any meaningful and long term conservation of rhinos.

Research: Backing up the three earlier priority topics, research is needed to provide information to direct conservation and to supplement it in the field.

Education: Education and extension work is an essential part of long term conservation.

Because of the urgency of the rhino problem and the need to channel funds from the WWF and other organisations into active conservation, a strong emphasis in the survey has been the development and implementation of projects. Already over 1.1 million dollars has been allocated to at least 28 projects.

In addition, following the study of the international trade in rhino products carried out by Dr. Esmond Bradley-Martin, the IUCN African Rhino Group emphasised that an all out attempt to stop the rhino trade was the first priority. WWF/ IUCN with the Rhino Group have put out a position statement on the action to be taken to achieve this which is now being carried out (See below).

To identify and promote conservation needs and to ensure long term interest and maintenance of action, the African Rhino Group has been re-established. It now has 25 members representing countries that have rhinos and a variety of fields of expertise.

In November 1980, I visited Sudan to carry out ground and aerial reconnaissance of the areas proposed for the white rhino national park.

In December, I visited South Africa, Swaziland, Bophuthatswana with Major Ian Grimwood, Honorary Consultant to the WWF Rhino Campaign, and Jane Brown, to complete the survey by acquainting ourselves with rhino conservation and management situation on the ground in these countries and to learn more of the methods of capture, translocation and management practised there. Major Grimwood also visited Zambia to study the rhino situation and anti-poaching measures in the Luangwa Valley.

Dr Kes Hillman
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