

lion-tailed macaque *Macaca silenus*, great pied hornbill *Buceros bicornis*, and king cobra *Ophiophagus hannah*.

A transparent and voluntary resettlement project involving eight families was recently taken place from Bhagwathi, a critical land parcel in the heart of the Park that has been encroached upon for the past 15–20 years. Prior to voluntary resettlement the families practised dairy farming and owned over 500 cattle that freely and illegally grazed in the Park. The livelihoods of the families depended on supplying their produce to a nearby mining township, and they would have been left with no means of livelihood once the mining township closed in December 2005 due to a court order requiring the mining company to end their operations in the Park (see *Oryx*, 37, 282).

The Wildlife Conservation Society and its conservation partners helped the families find suitable alternative agricultural land outside the Park, and the Karnataka Forest Department provided support for transportation. All eight families moved to their new homes in March 2003. Financial support was provided by the Wildlife Conservation Society, with a matching grant from Microsoft Corporation, USA. A compensation package of nearly \$30,000 was provided for their houses and for the purchase of agricultural land outside the Park. The relinquished land is once again in the custody of the Forest Department.

This project was initiated because progress by the Government in acquiring crucial land within wildlife reserves moves slowly due to shortage of funds and litigation-prone government legal procedures. The initiative aimed to solve the encroachment problem through a socially just and voluntary resettlement program. This mitigation of human-wildlife conflict through private-public partnerships with international donor support could be used as a model to solve encroachment problems in other protected areas.

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Reintroduction of black rhino to North Luangwa National Park, Zambia

Zambia is historically one of the major range states for the black rhino *Diceros bicornis minor* (see also *Oryx*, 37, 139), and the Luangwa Valley was one of the strongholds of the animals in the country. In the early 1970s the Luangwa Valley was home to an estimated population of 4,000–12 000 (Ansell, W.F.H., 1975, Black rhinoceros in Zambia. *Oryx*, 13, 83–84). The large, unfenced, and under-funded National Parks and Game Management Areas of Zambia were, however, very vulnerable to

the wave of poaching that swept over the continent in the late 1970s and the 1980s, and by the early 1990s the majority of Zambia's black rhinos were gone. The IUCN African Rhino Status Survey considered them "Presumed Nationally Extinct" in 1999, with no confirmed sightings or spoor for over 6 years (Emslie, R. & Brooks, M., 1999, *African Rhino. Status Survey and Conservation Action Plan*. IUCN/SSC African Rhino Specialist Group. IUCN, Gland, Switzerland & Cambridge, UK).

The 4,600 km² North Luangwa National Park, situated in the mid to upper Luangwa Valley, has been jointly managed since 1986 by the Zambian Wildlife Authority (ZAWA) and the Frankfurt Zoological Society (FZS) in the form of the North Luangwa Conservation Project. The resulting long-term continuity in support of law enforcement and management led to the required levels of security that made the reintroduction of black rhinos to the Park, and in effect to Zambia, feasible. In 2001 the South African Development Community Regional Programme for Rhino Conservation carried out a positive evaluation of North Luangwa as a suitable reintroduction site (Dunham, K. M., 2001, *Reintroduction of Black Rhino in the Luangwa Valley, Zambia*. IUCN SADC Regional Programme for Rhino Conservation. IUCN, Harare, Zimbabwe). A truly international and regional effort led to the release of the first five animals into a central fenced sanctuary in North Luangwa in June 2003.

These animals were part of an agreement between FZS, Frankfurt Zoo, South African National Parks and ZAWA. Frankfurt Zoo has sent two black rhino calves, born in the zoo, to South African National Parks and a third will follow later this year. Two of these animals form the basis of the arrangement to give the five animals to Zambia, through the mediation of the Frankfurt Zoological Society. This part of the reintroduction is just the first step towards the goal of establishing a founder population of at least 20 animals in the Park over the next 3 years. The re-establishment of a viable population of black rhino in one of its most important historical range states is a further positive step forward in the conservation of this Critically Endangered species, as well as signalling the start of a new era for wildlife in Zambia.

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The proposed Lomako Forest Reserve of the Democratic Republic of Congo: urgent action needed

Four years after civil war forced them to flee the region, international conservationists have recently returned to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to follow up on the