

Zoos (Ebedes):

It is important to get a breeding nucleus of black rhinos into captivity. [But consideration must be given to keeping hybrids out of any breeding plans - Wilkinson]. Over 200 000 children go through the National Zoological Gardens at Pretoria annually, and about three-quarters are Africans. Therefore a good educational effort is possible at zoos. Because of zoo economics, the animals should come from the Republic of South Africa (i.e. Zululand) itself and not from Zimbabwe as was suggested. At present there are only single animals at Johannesburg and Pretoria zoos and Potgietersrust Breeding Centre.

General:

There remain many unknowns in rhino biology, let alone in rhino management. Why do we have a criterion of 50 animals in an area as a viable group - surely a smaller group at high density could be monitored more easily and more accurately? Whereas a larger area is "better" in terms of being more resilient, on the other hand we do not want all our eggs (=rhinos) in one basket, such as the Kruger National Park. We must spread them around. In this respect the long-term prospects of an area become very important - and only national and provincial parks and reserves can offer these.

Whilst a suggested national committee on rhino management is not an urgency (what to do with rhinos and where to send them), nevertheless, arrangements should be started immediately due to the bureaucratic procedures. At the same time it is recognised that Natal has the primary responsibility as this Province has surplus animals for removal and distribution - about 19 black and 130 white per year. South West Africa has been working separately hitherto, and perhaps this country could be included, and the same could be said for Botswana. The committee could deal with questions of habitat, population size, etc.

---oOo---