

6.2.4. HISTORICAL NOTES ON THE TRANSLOCATION OF RHINOS IN AFRICA

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The history of the capture of both black and white rhinos for release elsewhere in the wild, with the purpose of either rescuing threatened populations or in order to restock other areas, is briefly reviewed. The capture of rhinos for zoo purposes is excluded.

Prior to 1960 capture was almost invariably effected by roping from a truck but with the advent of the Palmer Cap-Churr gun and syringe, and the subsequent development of a series of progressively more suitable drugs, chemical restraint soon became the general method of capture.

Brief mention is made of the successive advances that followed the discovery of the drug mixtures commonly referred to as Sernyl, Flaxedil, Themalon and M99, and new hunting techniques developed in applying them and a short account is given of major translocation programmes carried out with their aid, or by roping.

Note is also taken of the number and kind of casualties incurred in those operations and, where known, of the fate of the animals after release.

6.2.5. AN ANTI-POACHING INTELLIGENCE DATA BANK FOR ZIMBABWE

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Law enforcement is a major responsibility of the Management Branch of the Department of National Parks and Wild Life Management in Zimbabwe and thus of all wardens, senior rangers, rangers and game scouts in that Branch. Information on poaching is gathered, stored and analysed at a local level. In some cases a formal system is adopted while in others the experience, information and intelligence is lost at a local level with the transfer of staff. Detailed statistical information and analyses which may be required for National decision making are difficult to extract from such a system.

To provide for long term continuity at a local, provincial and national level it is necessary to move on to a standardised and computerised system of information storage and retrieval. The Department is in the process of developing such a system and the following categories of information are presently considered most pertinent.

1. Where and when the offence occurred
2. The type of animal or plant involved and its value
3. Full details of the accused and/or convicted persons
4. Details of the weapons, traps etc. used in committing the offence.
5. Details of the station, police station and court involved in the case and the result of the prosecution
6. Information on the social background of the accused and motives involved in the offence

The use of such information in the promotion of local and national efforts to curb illegal and uncontrolled use of natural resources is discussed.