

Save the Rhino Trust Trackers Support

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Save the Rhino Trust (SRT) required funding support for the Communal Rhino Custodian Support Programme (CRCSP). The overall aim of the CRCSP is to assist the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) and Communal Rhino Custodians by providing incentives to ensure more effective rhino patrols are conducted.

The Programme is implemented by a Communal Rhino Custodian Support Group (CRCSG). Each of the nine Conservancies involved provides one or two employed staff to work as ‘Conservancy Rhino Rangers’ for a joint 7-14 day patrol every second month. CRCSG provides transport, basic food rations, basic rhino tracking and monitoring training while on patrol, performance bonus payment, general field equipment, basic uniforms and one set of specialist rhino monitoring equipment.

The Coordinator of the Programme records, maintains and manages rhino monitoring data collected by the Conservancy Rhino Rangers by:

- Collecting and checking rhino ID forms from Conservancy Rhino Rangers on a monthly basis, processing rhino sightings and ensuring payment is made to the relevant Conservancy Rhino Rangers.
- Ensuring that data is handed to MET for entry into the database.

Results

On average, joint patrols occurred slightly less than planned (average being four, with the rangers who joined later in the year doing one or two). This was due largely to the unanticipated interest in the programme, which resulted in two new conservancy teams joining halfway through, requiring team leaders to conduct additional training patrols. Further, a capture operation caused one month to be dedicated to this activity.

All patrol reports were completed as planned by each team leader for each month (33, including one month with no joint patrol reports due to capture) and all rhino ID forms and photographs from joint patrols have been submitted to MET.

*Building capacity amongst rhino ‘custodians’ in the conservancies of the Kunene region of north-west Namibia, thus increasing the monitoring and protection of the desert-adapted black rhino *Diceros bicornis bicornis**

