
Abstracts

Finances: the vital factor in rhinoceros conservation

STUART FICHAT

Stuart Fichat, Rhino and Elephant Foundation, P.O. Box 381, Bedfordview, 2008 Republic of South Africa.

The use of land in any way whatsoever, involves intrinsic costs for both individuals concerned and society as a whole. The appreciation of this cost factor, however, is absent from most conservation literature and discussions to date. This glaring omission is illustrated by means of a brief historical overview of the founding and development of Africa's important national parks, which came into existence in the early years of the 20th century, without taking the then prevalent demographic and economic pressures into consideration. Failure to appreciate the importance of these pressures (especially financial) has contributed to the false belief that conservation can be undertaken without regard for cost. Under present-day circumstances, the cost of conserving wildlife must obviously be related to the cost of the land and the resources involved. Failure to meet the minimum funds required means that all expenditure less than that minimum is wasted.

Towards a black rhinoceros *Diceros bicornis* translocation strategy to meet the aims of the conservation plan for the species in South Africa and the TBVC states¹

R. H. EMSLIE and P.S. GOODMAN

R.H. Emslie, Black Rhino 2000², Hluhluwe Game Reserve, Box 25, Mtubatuba, 3935, Natal, Republic of South Africa; P.S. Goodman, Natal Parks Board, Mkuzi Game Reserve, Private Bag X550, Mkuze, 3965 Republic of South Africa.

Black rhinoceros *Diceros bicornis* (Linnaeus, 1758) population growth must be maximised to meet the goals of the South African conservation plan for the species. Translocation forms the key to achieving increased growth, and this paper outlines a suggested translocation strategy to meet the goals of the conservation plan. Improved data on population size, age and sex structure are prerequisites for scientific management. Changes in the annual rate of population increase, after the effects of rainfall and birth-lag effects have been statistically removed, will provide the best indicator of when animals should be moved. We propose that in the absence of heavy poaching, captive breeding should only be considered in South Africa for orphaned animals, injured animals with little chance of survival in the wild, and treated injured animals whose condition deteriorates after being re-released into the wild. Removals in future should be more selective for age class.

Animals younger than six years old are the prime animals for translocation. The use of a microlight aircraft to search for specific animals may reduce capture costs in future. Re-estab-

lishing populations should be given preference until the desired number of founders have been introduced. Only then should new populations be established. If the principles of the conservation plan are adopted, new populations will only need to be founded in about six years.

¹ Republics of Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda, and Ciskei.

² A joint project of the Natal Parks Board, the Southern African Nature Foundation (representing the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) in southern Africa), the Endangered Wildlife Trust, and Total (South Africa).

Status, history and performance of black rhinoceros *Diceros bicornis* populations in South Africa, the TBVC states¹ and Namibia

R.H. EMSLIE and KERYN ADCOCK

Black Rhino 2000², Hluhluwe Game Reserve, Box 25, Mtubatuba, 3935 Republic of South Africa.

The widely publicised decline of the black rhinoceros *Diceros bicornis* (Linnaeus, 1758), and the battle to save it from extinction, has centered on rapidly dwindling populations of Zimbabwe, Central and East Africa. It is not widely known that one third of the world's remaining 3 000 black rhinoceros now occur in the region comprising South Africa, the TBVC states and Namibia. The majority of these populations have increased in recent years. However, no-one actively concerned with rhinoceros has any delusions about the seriousness of the threat facing the region's rhinoceros, black and white. Recent poaching of black rhinoceros in Namibia, and white rhinoceros *Ceratotherium simum* (Burchell, 1817) in Swaziland is cause for grave concern.

Three of the four recognised subspecies *Diceros bicornis bicornis* (Linnaeus, 1758), *D.b. minor* (Drummond, 1876), and *D.b. michaeli* Zukowsky, 1964 occur in the region. A knowledge of each population's status and relative performance is a precursor to improving management of these populations on a strategic, rather than on a parochial single reserve or conservation organisation basis. Comparisons between the performances of various populations are of particular management interest. To allow such comparisons, the mean annual rates of increase of the various populations were estimated using standard methods. It was generally not possible to compare population performance between areas using the literature. Quoted performances either used different measures and calculation methods, or did not exist.

For this paper, Brooks (1989) was used as a major source of census information. The census method used, and an indication of the precision of the estimate are given where possible. Much of the data on the history of the different populations is scattered throughout the literature. By including a brief history of each population, it was endeavoured to make this information accessible in a synthesised form.

BROOKS, P.M. 1989. Proposed conservation plan for the black rhinoceros *Diceros bicornis* in South Africa, the TBVC states and Namibia. *Koedoe* 32(2): 1-30.

¹ Republics of Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda, and Ciskei.

² A joint project of the Natal Parks Board, the Southern African Nature Foundation (representing the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) in southern Africa), the Endangered Wildlife Trust, and Total (South Africa).