

Werikhe walk funds help rhinos – and people – in Kenya, Cameroun and Namibia

Endangered black rhinoceros all over Africa have better prospects for survival, thanks to money raised by Michael Werikhe, Kenya's own Rhino Man, in the United States.

According to Helen Gichohi, chairperson of the Michael Werikhe Walk Committee, efforts to save the black rhino in its natural habitat has also created new jobs and tourist potential in Africa. She said that the East African Wild Life Society and Wildlife Conservation International have already disbursed funds raised by Werikhe to four projects:

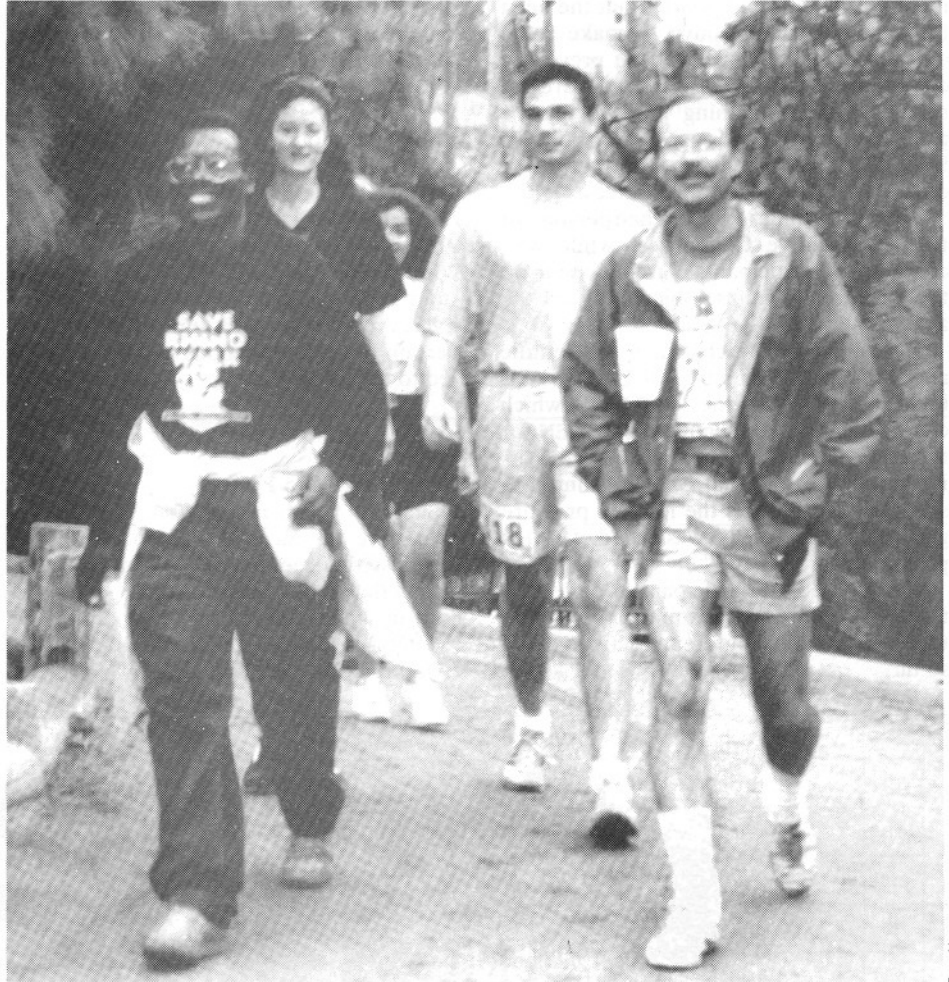
In Kenya, a wall along a boundary of Ol Ari Nyiro Ranch in Laikipia will serve a dual purpose: it will keep rhinos inside the ranch, where they are protected. It will also stop wild animals from wandering out and damaging crops on nearby farmland. The building of the wall, soon to begin, will provide jobs for many people in the neighbourhood.

One million shillings were given to the Gallmann Memorial Foundation, which operates the ranch as a wildlife sanctuary, to purchase a tractor and tipper-trailer to build the wall, and pay salaries to start the work.

Kenya's programme of rhino sanctuaries has worked well, but small populations of black rhinoceros remain outside the parks. To help the Kenya Wildlife Service monitor these rhinos, and translocate them if they are threatened, Ksh 800,000 has been allocated to purchase a four-wheel drive vehicle and build holding pens for translocated animals.

The last of the West African race of the black rhinoceros are found in Cameroun. Only about 30 to 40 rhinos remain. A project was launched to save the rhino in Cameroun early this year. Based on Kenya's success, it will involve moving some animals to a protected rhino sanctuary, and community work to encourage the protection of the other rhinos.

About Ksh 200,000 was given to the World Wide Fund for Nature in Cameroun, which is co-ordinating the project. This was



Michael leads the 1992 Save the Rhino Walk of the Zoological Society of San Diego, California.

spent on a quick aerial survey and on holding a workshop on rhino conservation attended by government officials, wildlife biologists and policy makers.

The desert race of the black rhinoceros still survives in Namibia, Africa's newest independent nation. Because of the vast distances involved in this arid country, a mobile patrol is needed to survey and protect the desert rhino.

About one million shillings was given to the Save the Rhino Trust Fund of Namibia to equip the 'Werikhe Rhino Patrol'. This includes a four-wheel-drive vehicle, radio, binoculars and uniforms. Michael Werikhe was invited to launch the patrol, to boost the morale of those who risk their lives to protect the rhino.

Mrs Gichohi added that Michael Werikhe's six-month fund-raising walk across the United States in 1991 is still bringing dividends.

'Werikhe was honoured by the Eddie Bauer Company of the US as one of its 1991 "Heroes for the Earth",' she said. 'This year, he gave the keynote speech to a major gathering of environmental attorneys in Eugene, Oregon, USA. And he went back to the United States to lead the 1992 Save the Rhino Walk of the Zoological Society of San Diego in California.'

'Werikhe brought back a cheque for US\$10,000 from the 1992 Save the Rhino Walk in San Diego. This will be used to continue assistance to Cameroun, and to support other rhino conservation projects in Kenya and Tanzania.'

Highlights on the Eastern Africa Environmental Network Conference 1992

The Second International Conference of the Eastern Africa Environmental Network (EAEN) was held at the National Museums of Kenya, Nairobi on 8 May 1992. It was sponsored by the New England Environmental Network (NEEN), the East African Wild Life Society (EAWLS), Global Action Network (GAN) and the National Museums of Kenya (NMK). More than 280 participants attended the conference with representatives from Botswana, Canada, Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Italy, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and USA.

The conference was formally opened by Mr Z. M. Anyieni, Chairman of the Perma-