

CONSERVATION OF RHINOCEROS IN NAMIBIA

This document has been submitted by Namibia pursuant to the recommendation of Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev).

1. THE STATUS OF CAPTIVE AND WILD RHINOCEROS POPULATIONS

The following table summarizes the current status of the two rhinoceros species present in Namibia, *Diceros bicornis bicornis* and *Ceratotherium simum simum*.

Locality	Estimate of black rhinoceros	Estimate of white rhinoceros	Comments
<i>Etosha National Park</i>	816	54	<i>D.b.b. population is increasing, and is the founder population for relocation to other areas; has reached carrying capacity in some regions.</i>
<i>Waterberg Plateau Park</i>	34	62	<i>D.b.b. population has reached carrying capacity as well as the C.s.s. population.</i>
<i>Hardap</i>	9	-	
<i>Kunene Region</i>	138	-	<i>Population has reached carrying capacity in the core area and will be manipulated through management options to increase the growth rate.</i>
<i>Commercial farms and communal conservancies</i>	137	88	<i>Sixteen sub-populations of D.b.b. to date. This meta-population is increasing.</i>
TOTAL	1134	204	

2. A SUMMARY OF INCIDENTS OF ILLEGAL HUNTING

The following table shows a list of incidents of illegal hunting of rhinoceros in Namibia, since 1997:

Year	Species	Number	Remarks
1997	<i>D.b. bicornis</i>	1	Horns recovered
2000	<i>D.b. bicornis</i>	1	Horns not recovered
2000	<i>C. s. simum</i>	2	One set of horns recovered

3. A SUMMARY OF INCIDENTS OF ILLEGAL TRADE IN RHINOCEROS PARTS AND DERIVATIVES

The following table summarizes all known incidents of illegal trade in rhino horns in Namibia, since 1997:

Year	Police Case Number	Police Office & Crime Register Number	Number of horns	Weight (kg)
1997		SWAKOPMUND GIF 5/2/97	2	9.60
	POL 7/10/97	WINDHOEK CR 156/3/97	2	2.80
	POL 7/8/97	WINDHOEK CR 875/02/97	1	4.45

Year	Police Case Number	Police Office & Crime Register Number	Number of horns	Weight (kg)
	POL 7/9/97	WINDHOEK CR 87/03/97	1	2.95
	POL 7/17/97	WINDHOEK GI 17/3/97	2	0.20
	POL 7/18/97	WINDHOEK CR 93/04/97	2	2.85
	POL 7/34/97	WINDHOEK CR 419/7/97	2	3.85
	TOTAL			12
1998	POL 7/03/98	REHOBOTH CR 34/01/98	1	1.20
	POL 7/1/98	WINDHOEK CR 190/1/98	1	2.55
	POL 7/26/98	WINDHOEK CR 1097/03/98	2	3.05
	POL 7/11/97	SWAKOPMUND GIF 14/6/97	1	0.60
	POL 7/59/98	WINDHOEK GI 1/08/98	1	2.65
TOTAL			6	10.05
1999	POL 7/10/99	TSUMEB	2	7.55
	TOTAL			2
2000	POL 7/34/2000	WINDHOEK CR 791/06/00	1	2.80
	TOTAL			1
2001	POL 7/48/2000	WINDHOEK GI 8/10/2000	2	3.00
	POL 7/14/2001	OTJIWARONGO CR 77/02/01	1	1.40
	POL 7/50/2001	HK AIRPORT CR 12/08/01	3	4.05
	POL 7/54/2001	WINDHOEK CR 652/09/01	1	1.10
	POL 7/28/2001	WINDHOEK CR 322/04/01	1	3.20
TOTAL			8	12.75
2002	POL 7/04/2002	WALVIS BAY CR 16/04/2002	1	2.00
	POL 7/18/2002	GROOTFONTEIN CR 91/04/2002	1	1.00
	TOTAL			2
2003	POL 7/01/2003	SWAKOPMUND CR 185/02/2003	1	0.85
	POL 7/20/2003	WINDHOEK CR 138/05/2003	1	1.70
	POL 7/25/2003	WINDHOEK GI 05/06/2003	1	0.65
	POL 7/06/2003	SWAKOPMUND GI 01/05/2003	1	2.90
	POL 7/35/2003	WINDHOEK CR 538/08/2003	2	3.20
TOTAL			6	9.3
TOTAL FOR PERIOD 1997-2003			37	72.15

4. THE STATUS, TYPE, AND FREQUENCY OF LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES AND MONITORING PROGRAMMES FOR ALL MAJOR RHINOCEROS POPULATIONS

Etosha National Park

In Etosha National Park (ENP), rhinoceroses are monitored during the dry season (April - November) through full-moon waterhole counts, where they are identified individually, and whenever possible, photographed. When the opportunity arises, rhinoceros are ear-notched to facilitate individual identification (about 140 are currently ear-notched).

Since 2002, a specialized block count technique has been developed and used annually for counting black rhinoceros in ENP, providing an updated population estimate.

The WPS (Wildlife Protection Services) of MET (Ministry of Environment and Tourism), based in the park, carry out regular patrols by vehicle, foot etc, and an aircraft is stationed in the park which is used for reconnaissance when necessary.

Waterberg Plateau Park

Mounted Unit: Horses are used extensively during weekly patrols, with emphasis on rhino monitoring. Approximately 2000 work-hours of horse patrols are conducted on the Plateau every year. During these patrols, rhino monitoring forms are completed.

Wildlife Protection Services: This unit consists of 16 staff members who are armed, and conduct foot patrols on the Plateau. Teams alternate to ensure that there is always a team active in the area. During these patrols, rhino monitoring forms are completed.

Full-moon counts: 48 and 72-hour counts are conducted at all waterholes in June and July, and sometimes August (weather/visibility allowing), to obtain the best population estimate. White rhinoceros and black rhinoceros are ear-notched as the opportunity arises.

Staff members, students and volunteers also complete rhino observation forms whenever a rhino is seen during the course of other duties. All staff is encouraged to participate in monitoring activities.

A computer database of all rhino sightings for both species is maintained by the Park warden, as well as by the Rhino Co-ordinator in Windhoek.

Kunene region

The Save the Rhino Trust (a Non-Governmental Organization) has a long-established desert rhinoceros-monitoring programme covering the entire rhino range in western Kunene. Over 30 staff members are employed to conduct regular patrols. Patrol teams cover all areas where rhino occur at least once every 4 months, and are accompanied by trackers who know the individual rhino in their area. Areas of higher density have permanent patrol units present who try to cover the area on a weekly basis. During patrols any fresh rhino tracks are followed, the animals located, identified and detailed records of distinguishing features are recorded. GPS positions are recorded and ID photographs taken. All the data from every such sighting are entered into a comprehensive database. Whereas most patrols are vehicle based with tracking on foot, a camel patrol unit is deployed in the mountainous region every month, producing excellent sighting records and number of sightings.

A complete census of the rhinoceros range is conducted on a five-yearly basis. Several patrol teams are deployed in the same area to locate all rhino. The teams move systematically through the range and cover all areas twice. Photographs are used to avoid any duplication of sightings. The results of the 2002/03-census resulted in a population estimate of 138 for Kunene.

Freehold game farms and conservancies

Black rhinoceros have been placed on freehold game farms and conservancies under the rhino custodianship scheme. Farm owners and conservancies are required to regularly monitor individuals on their land, and to conduct regular patrols to ensure the safety of these animals. They are also required to submit a quarterly report to MET supplying information on the status of the rhino on their farm.

The Ministry's Rhino Custodian Manager conducts regular visits to all the farms involved in this scheme. Each animal is photographed at least once a year, and an attempt is made to sex and age all new calves within six months, in addition to information collection by the custodian.

Hardap Game Park

The Hardap population is monitored by the Wildlife Protection staff of MET on a daily basis through routine patrols. All rhinoceros are physically observed at least every second day.

5. THE STATUS OF DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL LEGISLATION AND NATIONAL CONSERVATION ACTION PLANS

Namibia has developed a Black Rhinoceros Conservation Strategy that concentrates on maximizing population growth rates through biological management, and expanding the range.

6. THE STATUS OF MARKING, REGISTRATION AND CONTROL OF RHINOCEROS HORN STOCKS

Horn originating from natural mortalities and management practices

Regional offices of MET keep a register of each rhino horn recovered from the field. On receipt of specimens in the regions, each item is entered into the appropriate register; an item number is allocated to each piece, and written on each item. The following information is also recorded for each item in the register: Item number, description (whether it is a piece or whole horn), date received, locality found, cause of death, age class, mass, outside curve length (only for whole horns), and base circumference (only for whole horns).

Regional offices are required to deposit specimens in the national repository in Windhoek on a regular basis (eg. quarterly), to minimise the possibility of losses from less secure localities in the regions.

When items are to be transported to the national repository in Windhoek, the original page as well as the duplicate from the register must then be removed and must accompany the items to Windhoek. In Windhoek the receiving officer signs in the appropriate space, and the duplicate copy returned to the issuing officer, who on return to base should staple this copy to the relevant page in the register, as proof that items are no longer in the regional store.

At the National Store, each item is carefully checked to ensure that all necessary markings have been made, and re-weighed on the electronic scale.

The original page of the register is used to computerize all the information, and then safely stored as documentary proof of origin.

Seized and confiscated rhinoceros horns

Seized rhino horns in Namibia are recovered by the Protected Resource Unit (PRU) of the Namibian Police. Members of the PRU are required to deposit rhino horns in the national repository (managed by the CITES Management Authority) in Windhoek.

At the national repository, each item is measured and weighed, clearly marked with the item number, and the details are entered on the appropriate form.

All documentation relating to each seizure and confiscation are attached to the original register form. This is used to computerize all the information, and is safely stored as documentary proof of origin.

When members of the PRU wish to withdraw items from the national repository for use as evidence at court cases, an issue voucher is completed, giving full details of every item withdrawn.

All seized rhino horns not claimed within five years and for which ownership and origin cannot otherwise be determined is regarded as the property of the State and the origin is deemed to be Namibia.