

TANZANIA, Anti-poaching Equipment for Reserves (Project 1930)

WWF/IUCN are providing equipment to consolidate anti-poaching work in Selous and Rungwa Game Reserves before intensity of poaching there reaches the same level as in northern Tanzania. Work includes rehabilitation of roads to areas difficult of access, establishment of anti-poaching posts and the carrying out of reconnaissance flights to identify areas of active poaching. Equipment being donated by WWF/IUCN includes six Landrovers, one Cessna aircraft, spares for graders and one generator.

Tanzania Wildlife Division

TANZANIA, Rhino, Anti-poaching, Northeastern Selous Game Reserve (Project 3018)

WWF/IUCN have donated a Toyota vehicle to patrol the northeastern Selous Game Reserve and to transport game rangers into the field.

Through the use of the vehicle it has been possible to ferry game rangers to points in the field from where they can begin their foot control surveillance. Owing to the types of vegetation and terrain in the Selous and the infrastructure of the reserve, only some areas can be served by the Toyota. Through its use, however, it has been possible to identify parts which have rhino concentration and which therefore need special attention. Use of the vehicle has enabled a number of poachers to be caught.

Tanzania Wildlife Division

ZAMBIA, Save the Rhino Trust, Anti-poaching Operations (Project 1757)

The Save the Rhino Trust of Zambia was formed in December 1979 in an attempt to combat the excessive commercial poaching and trading in ivory and rhino horn which was taking a heavy toll of elephants and rhinos.

Lack of resources including vehicles, fuel, radios and other patrol equipment had severely handicapped the Department of Wildlife and National Parks, and the Honorary Wildlife Rangers, in the execution of their duties. The Trust was therefore established to mobilise resources both nationally and internationally in key priority areas for three years. The Trust has the involvement and

support of the Republic of Zambia, the Honorary Wildlife Rangers of Zambia, the Wildlife Conservation Society of Zambia, and of WWF and IUCN. An important objective was the establishment of effective anti-poaching units capable of carrying on after the expiration of the project, including the training of Zambian Wildlife Guards.

Two anti-poaching units were set up to cover the Luangwa Valley and the Lower Zambezi, where most of the elephant and rhino occur and where poaching was heaviest. The two field units have achieved considerable success against organised poaching groups, many of whom are armed with automatic firearms. The units have arrested a total of 807 poachers, confiscated 328 illegal firearms and recovered 649 elephant tusks and 40 rhino horns.

The largest anti-poaching operation ever undertaken in the history of Zambia was carried out successfully in November 1981. It was launched because the effectiveness of the anti-poaching campaign was being jeopardised by loopholes through which some of the ring-leaders were escaping capture and prosecution. In view of the security aspects involved (use of automatic firearms by the poachers) and the evasion of exchange control (smuggling of ivory and rhino horn), it was felt that the problem should be treated under the country's emergency regulations. A full-scale military operation was therefore mounted to pull in the poachers and break up the poaching rings. It involved 126 personnel, 10 motor vehicles, one helicopter and one aircraft. The personnel included a platoon of the Police Mobile Unit, C.I.D. officers, Wildlife Scouts and members of the Save the Rhino Trust anti-poaching units.

The target area for this operation was Luangwa (North) National Park, Luangwa (South) National Park, Lukusuzi National Park, Luambe National Park, Lumimba Game Management Area, Lupande Game Management Area, Sandwe Game Management Area, Munyamadzi Game Management Area, Lower Zambezi International Game Park and the Mpika villages in Chief Mpumba's area.

The overall result of the operation was 187 arrests, the confiscation of 132 firearms of which nine were automatic, and recovery of 147 tusks and two rhino horns. A total of 14 top hunters leading organised poaching gangs were among those arrested, as well as three organisers and principal buyers.

The operation brought organised poaching temporarily under control in the National Parks and Game Management Areas. But we must not be complacent or relax the anti-poaching patrols. The government has proved its willingness to support our anti-poaching efforts and there is no doubt they will be responsible to a similar appeal in the future if poaching activities get out of hand again.

M J Faddy
Chairman, Operations Committee
Save the Rhino Trust