

encounters. It is estimated that the potential black rhino carrying capacity of the reserve is considerably in excess of 50 rhinos, possibly up to 100, but that initial stocking rates by translocation should be 30 to 35 rhinos.

It has been shown that to avoid loss of genetic material in small populations, they should build up fairly rapidly in generation times and an effective population (of breeding individuals) of 50 has been suggested as a workable minimum.

The overall density of the reserve is still so low that there are individuals that are too peripheral to be likely to be able to contribute to the gene pool. Increase of the current population is therefore recommended. There are currently six males, five females and a calf. A higher proportion of females than males is needed for further introductions.

Project 1757**Rhino Conservation in Luangwa Valley National Parks, Zambia**

WWF Funding 1982/83 — \$103,196
(Total since 1980 — \$437,891)

Project Initiated 1980

Project Executants Zambian Government; Save the Rhino Trust, Lusaka.

Objective To carry out anti-poaching field operations in the Luangwa Valley, so as to eliminate commercial poaching and benefit elephants, rhinos and other species.

Participating Organizations Norwegian Agency for International Development (NORAD); African Wildlife Foundation; New York Zoological Society.

The Save the Rhino Trust began operations in Zambia in 1980 to combat the escalating commercial poaching of rhino and elephant which had risen to unprecedented levels. With funds raised by a Save the Rhino Appeal, launched by WWF President, HRH the Duke of Edinburgh, during a visit to Zambia, the Trust was able to equip two mobile anti-poaching units with vehicles and radios to patrol the Luangwa and Zambezi Valley, where there are still viable populations of black rhino.

Additional anti-poaching operations were needed in Zambia, over and above those carried out by the National Parks and Wildlife Services, because of the shortage of finance, transport and manpower, coupled with the world increase in demand for ivory and rhino horn and the subsequent rise in their value. In the five years preceding 1980, the elephant population of the Luangwa Valley had been reduced by about 50,000.



Rhino poachers arrested at their camp in Zambia. The Save the Rhino Trust operates two mobile anti-poaching patrols in the Luangwa and Zambezi valleys.

Photo: WWF/Save the Rhino Trust

It was feared that, with the cessation of major funding by WWF, the Trust would have to cease operations in 1983, but it was able to continue at a similar level to previous years and even to establish a third anti-poaching unit, by using reserves and the proceeds from the sale of a helicopter. Unfortunately there has been no decrease in the level of commercial poaching and in order to make the most of limited funds and manpower, it was decided to restrict activities mainly to intensive patrols of the principal elephant and rhino strongholds. While this has minimised the incursion of poachers into these key areas, it has left large tracts of the South Luangwa National Park and the entire North Luangwa National Park at the mercy of poachers. Because of continuing financial restraints, the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Services has been unable to provide effective cover to these other areas. For the fourth year running, the Trust has been able to provide assistance with its highly mobile anti-poaching units in the Luangwa Valley and the Zambezi Valley.

It is anticipated that funds due to be received from the Norwegian Agency for International Development (NORAD) will secure the units' anti-poaching activities for the next two years at least.

During 1983, the Trust also continued to sponsor both rhino and elephant research.

Project 1933

Rhino Census Methods and Publicity, Tanzania

WWF Funding 1983 — \$219

(Total since 1981 — \$9,754)

Project Initiated 1981

Project Executant F.M.R. Lwezaula, Director, Wildlife Division.

Objectives To develop census methods for rhinos in forested areas and train field personnel; and to promote public awareness of the threat to rhino populations and the importance of conservation.

WWF donated a van to the Tanzania Wildlife Division for the 'Save the Rhino' campaign, launched in June 1983 by President J.K. Nyerere of Tanzania.

The campaign, inaugurated at the College of African Wildlife Management at Mweka, aims to draw public attention to the plight of the black rhino, which has declined drastically in numbers over the past decade. Methods used include distribution of posters, radio programmes, newspaper articles, choir songs, film shows and songs. Special T-shirts have been printed.