RMG Annual Status Reports

- Population sizes and methodology for population estimation
- Population history table (all individuals known)
- Sex/age structure – not all individuals
- Breeding records of known females
- Home range sizes
- Introductions
- Translocations
- Mortalities – post mortems
- Poaching levels – all species
- Neighbours programmes
- Research

Annual Status Reports were submitted annually for each population, and a consolidated report was produced every 2-3 years. Status reports contained updated information on progress towards national goals and the performance of individual populations, and also provided advice to members on improved rhino management.

Discussion

(*Southern White Rhinos*) Asked about the reasons for the successful conservation of white rhinos in South Africa, Dr Brooks stressed the historical differences, and the relative wealth of South Africa and resources for rhino conservation, which provided a better environment for improvement. All ingredients had to be in place for conservation programmes to be effective. He highlighted the need for motivated staff, an uncorrupted judiciary and well-informed magistrates.

(SADC Rhino Groups: RMG and RRG) Several members asked about the future relationship between the RRG and RMG, the need for exchange of information between groups, and how this would be achieved. Dr Brooks said that AfRSG could assist with this, but linkages needed to be built as well. Messrs Theophilus, Kingengo and Sefu suggested the holding of RMG and RRG meetings side-by-side, with a joint third day. Bilateral contacts (e.g. between Angola and Namibia on transfrontier conservation) were still possible at any time.

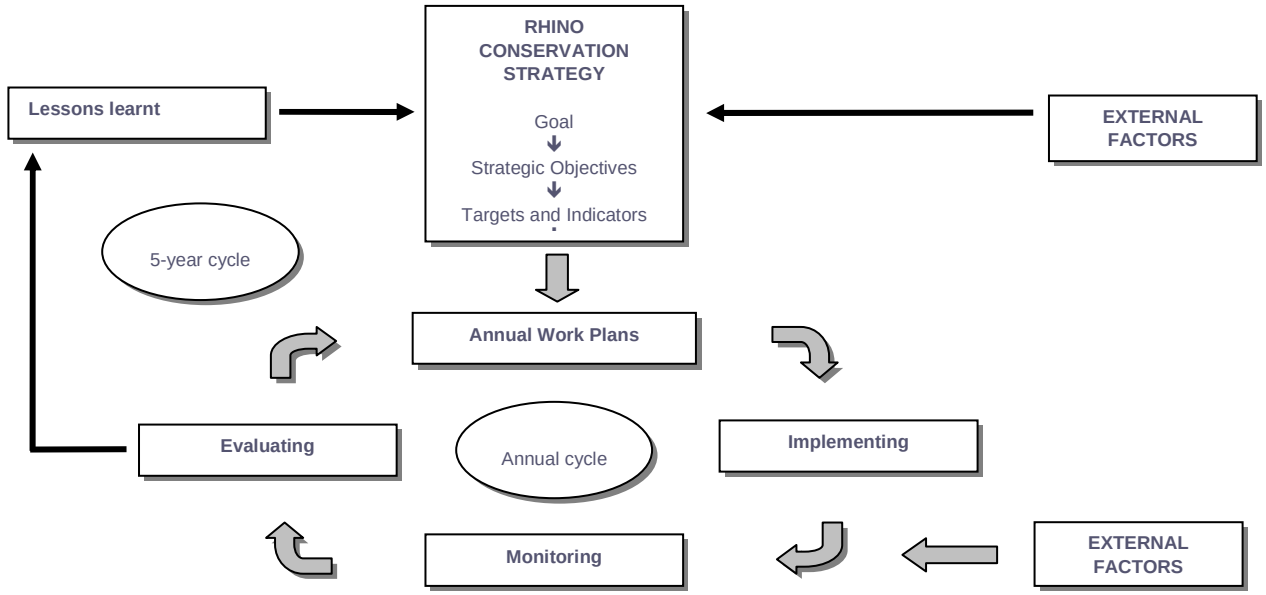
(*RMG funding and structure*) Mr Jiah asked how the funding of RMG was organised. Dr Brooks said that the RMG countries generally had sufficient funding to send representatives in the past and no funding was needed. Meetings were hosted by member countries. However this was becoming more difficult, and there was now need to get funding from elsewhere. Dr Kampamba asked about the structure and terms of reference for the RMG, and Dr Brooks said that the ToR could be circulated, and that an active Chair or coordinator for the group had to be elected by the members.

2.3 National Strategy Development: Common Issues and Lessons Learnt (Rob Brett)

The important ingredients in the development of a national rhino conservation strategy were summarised, based on the history of development of rhino strategies in several range states, including two RRG countries (Tanzania and Botswana). The remaining four RRG countries (Malawi, Zambia, Angola, Mozambique) have still to develop their own rhino conservation strategies, and it is hoped and expected that the planning process in their countries can be informed by the experience of other range states.

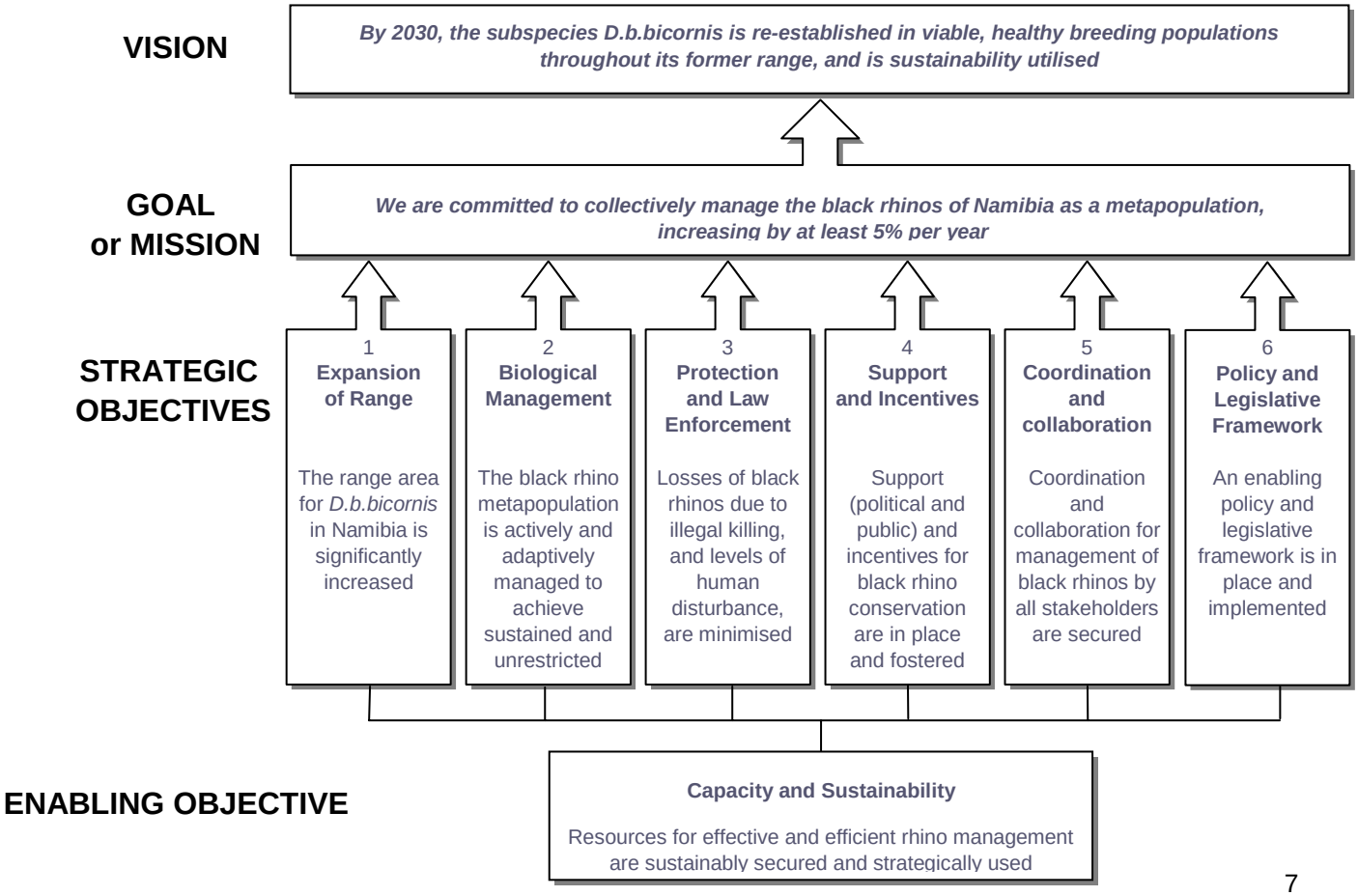
(a) Planning Cycle

A typical planning cycle for a national rhino conservation programme was described (illustrated below), comprising the use of a rhino conservation Strategy to guide the development of annual work plans, and their implementation and monitoring. Evaluation of the work programme feeds back to the revision of the Strategy (e.g. on a 5-year basis), where the goals and objectives are re-evaluated in the light of progress achieved.



(b) Strategic Framework

The Logical Framework approach has been used by several range states as a tool to structure their rhino conservation strategies where results-based planning works through successive levels, and a number of key strategic objectives are defined, which contribute to attainment of the overall goal of the Strategy. Activities and actions that will result in achievement of the strategic objectives can then be developed within periodic action plans. Logical frameworks (similar to the framework developed in a recent strategic planning exercise for rhino conservation in **Namibia, below**) were an integral part of the rhino strategies developed in the last five years in Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Namibia, South Africa (white rhinos) and Botswana. Namibia's rhino strategy was complemented by two other plans specific to rhino security and conservation of rhinos by private custodians.



(c) Goals

Rhino strategies developed by range states in the last decade typically include one or both of the following targets:

- a total population or metapopulation of 2,000 rhinos
- a population growth rate of at least 5% per annum

(d) Strategic Objectives

Many of the Strategic Objectives defined in the rhino strategies of range states in the last five years are shared, with the most common being:

(i) Co-ordination Mechanisms
(ii) Protection of all populations
(iii) Biological Management to achieve growth
(iv) Monitoring & Evaluation
(v) Sustainability & Support
(vi) Ensuring Implementation

The strategic objectives used in the rhino strategies developed for African rhinos since 1997 are shown in the table below:

Strategic Objective	**Botswana** Both	**Kenya** Black	**Namibia** Black	**RSA** Black	**RSA** White	**Tanzania** Black	**Zimbabwe** Both
Year	2000	2001	2002	1997	2000	1998	1997
Coordination	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Protection & Law Enforcement	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Biological Management	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Monitoring & Status Reporting	✓	✓		✓			✓
Sustainability & Funding Support	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
Implementation & monitoring of plan							✓
Community Involvement			✓		✓	✓	
Capacity Building		✓				✓	
Policy & Legislation			✓				
Sustainable Use					✓		
Animal Welfare					✓		
Genetic Management				✓			
Expansion of Range & New Populations			✓	✓			
Captive Breeding				✓			
Endorsement	Not yet	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not yet	Yes

(e) National Planning & Coordination

Successful planning, coordination and implementation of a nation rhino programme depends on the operation of each of the following:

(i) Government appointment and operation of a Rhino Management Authority
(ii) Development and high level endorsement of a Rhino Conservation Strategy
(iii) Formation and regular convening of Coordination Structures: Committees
(iv) Appointment and function of a Rhino Coordinator or Focal Point
(v) Action Planning and Implementation of plans

(f) Endorsement and Implementation

Finally, progress within a national rhino conservation programme depends not only on endorsement of a strategy, but its actual implementation through approved action plans. Well-developed strategies and

plans are of no use if they are not implemented, and action is dependent on the commitment and resources of national rhino management authorities.

Discussion
(*Implementation of strategies and plans*) Mr Theophilus said that stressed that implementation of a plan was dependent on commitment. Mr Sefu encouraged ministers to endorse management plans, and to ensure that there was commitment to government spending on rhino conservation through their treasury. Mr Chafota said that endorsement should be linked to mobilisation of resources, and Dr Kampamba highlighted the need for adequate budgeting.

Mr du Toit added that coordination and commitment were crucial; Zimbabwe had a nice tidy strategy that was not being used, there being no coordination meetings for the last 18 months. He recommended periodic audits by RRG to check on the implementation of member countries' strategies.

Mr Chafota suggested that the ToR for the RRG be adapted from the ToR of the RMG to suit the stage of programme development of RRG countries and a flexible approach. Dr Brooks emphasised that the RMG has no executive powers, and does not lobby or impose pressure on a member country to do A, B or C. Members activities as a catalyst from within the group. Mr Nzima added that an important stimulus for action within the RRG would be the peer pressure from within the group.

(*Strategy development*) Mr Kingengo asked RRG to help Angola with prioritising strategies for rhinos and elephants and the need for ground surveys.

2.4 Reintroduction Guidelines: Overview (Raoul du Toit)

This presentation addressed the strategic requirements for reintroduction of rhinos. In order to achieve a viable breeding effort, biological, genetic and demographic factors need to be considered, as well as management and security, coordination mechanisms and the potential for population expansion. Additional factors to address are:

- External factors, and threats (e.g. civil war, poaching community)
- Sustainability and adequacy of funding
- Appropriate policy framework
- Legal provisions
- Funding: e.g. incentives for private sector involvement
- Man-power - capacity, equipment, motivation of training

Broad principles for rhino reintroductions

(a) Genetic management for rhinos

- There should be at least 20 founders, unrelated to others, and should be (or become) effective breeders. The number of effective breeders may not necessarily be the same as the total number brought in.
- Areas should have large carrying capacity (over 100 rhinos), or be linked as a metapopulation to other populations - including active management and movement of rhinos between populations - to get over small carrying capacity problems. Such management entails significant financial costs, deployment of scarce expertise and specialized equipment. It is impossible to prevent any risks to rhinos during their intensive management.
- Introduce 1-2 effective breeders every generation (8-15 years)
- Maintain rapid population growth

Issues:
(i) Gene Pool and Sampling, and Inbreeding
Genetic drift is the consequence of random sampling of genes into the next generation. This must be compensated for by introduction of unrelated animals. Rapid population growth increases rate of sampling, and makes it less likely that some genetic material will be lost from the gene pool through the deaths of non-breeding or slowly-breeding rhinos. Ideally, founder groups should be drawn from several