

Four of six black rhinos translocated to Chad are now dead

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- *Four of the six black rhinos reintroduced to Chad's Zakouma National Park from South Africa in May are now dead, authorities say.*
- *Two of the rhinos were found dead recently, following from the deaths of two other rhinos in October.*
- *Authorities say the rhinos were not poached, and suggest they may have been having trouble adapting to their new habitat. More tests will be needed to determine the cause of death.*
- *The deaths in Zakouma come just months after 11 black rhinos died within days of being reintroduced into Kenya's Tsavo East National Park in July.*

Two black rhinos have been found dead in Chad's Zakouma National Park, adding to the [two individuals that died last month](#) after being brought in from South Africa.

The most recent deaths were reported by the governments of South Africa and Chad, as well as African Parks, an NGO that helps run protected areas in nine African countries.

The dead rhinos were from a group of six individuals reintroduced to Zakouma in May from South Africa's Addo National Park, marking the return of black rhinos (*Diceros bicornis*) to Chad after [nearly 50 years of absence](#).

None of the four dead rhinos were poached, African Parks said in a [press release](#). Post-mortem reports and analysis of blood, tissue and fecal samples from the rhinos did not find anything to indicate that infectious disease or plant toxicity may have led to their deaths, either. There was some evidence of exposure to trypanosomes, a parasite that's transmitted to animals and humans by tsetse flies, but this is unlikely to have caused mortality, the statement said. All four dead rhinos had low fat reserves, though.

'Low fat reserves suggest that maladaptation by the rhinos to their new environment is the likely underlying cause, although tests to be undertaken on

brain and spinal fluid may shed additional light on the exact cause of deaths,” the statement said.

Park officials and veterinarians are keeping a close eye on the two remaining rhinos. They have captured one and placed it in an enclosure, and are in the process of capturing the last rhino.

Only [about 5,000 black rhinos](#), represented by three subspecies, remain in the wild today. Chad once harbored both black rhinos and white rhinos (*Ceratotherium simum*), but rampant poaching wiped out both species from the country several decades ago. Black rhinos were last spotted in Zakouma, Chad’s oldest national park, in the early 1970s.

To ensure the long-term survival of black rhinos, African Parks worked with government agencies in Chad and South Africa to [move six rhinos](#) (two males and four females) from Addo to Zakouma in May this year. However, like the [botched Kenya translocation](#) in July this year, in which all 11 reintroduced black rhinos died, the Zakouma experiment has come to serve as a cautionary tale.

