

KWS WILD

Edition 1 June - December 2023

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Unveiling the 2022-2026

National Black Rhino Recovery and Action Plan

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Milestones in conservation



Former CS. for Tourism, Wildlife and Heritage, Hon. Peninah Malonza and other guests displaying copies of the launched strategy.
Photo | Hope Nyangweso/ KWS

National Rhino Recovery and Action Plan 2022-2026, is an ambitious plan focused on seven key components, each designed to address different aspects of rhino conservation aimed at driving positive change. But do we really understand what these components entail? With a clear objective of increasing the number of black rhino by at least 5 percent, keeping poaching rates below 0.5 percent, and reducing rhino mortality from natural causes to less than 0.5 percent annually, the plan sets a bold course for the next five years.

One of the cornerstone components of the plan is rhino protection and law enforcement. This involves strengthening efforts to combat poaching through improved monitoring, surveillance, and coordination among enforcement agencies. Investing in technology and training for park rangers is crucial to ensure the safety of rhinos in their natural habitats.

Biological monitoring and management; This component looks at understanding the rhino population dynamics which is essential for conservation success.

Biological monitoring and management involve regularly assessing the health, genetics, and reproductive rates of rhino populations. This data guides decision-making and ensures that conservation efforts are tailored to the specific needs of each population. This is a vital component, especially when it comes to rhino translocation.

Population expansion; to ensure the long-term survival of rhinos, the plan focuses on population expansion. This includes strategic translocations of rhinos to

suitable habitats, establishing new populations in protected areas, and maintaining genetic diversity to prevent inbreeding. In the next five years, space is required to host approximately 500 rhinos resulting from population growth and from destocking sanctuaries. Black rhinos like other mega herbivores, require large areas to support viable populations for the long term.

Research informing management; The black rhino in Kenya is facing threats from poaching, overstocking in sanctuar-

A Black Rhino and its calf at Nairobi National Park Photo | KWS





ies, habitat degradation and conversion, climate change, disease, predation and potential interbreeding depression. Scientific research therefore plays a pivotal role in informing effective conservation strategies. Investing in research on rhino behavior, habitat requirements, and disease management ensures that decisions are based on the latest scientific insights, leading to more effective conservation efforts.

Stakeholder engagement and communication; involving local communities, NGOs, and international stakeholders is crucial for the success of the plan. Engaging these groups fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility for rhino conservation. Transparent communication about progress, challenges, and successes builds public support and awareness.

Sustained financing and resources; to realize the outcomes of this plan, support from different sectors therefore becomes necessary. Conservation efforts require sustained financial support and resources. The plan outlines strategies for securing funding through national and county government initiatives, private sector partnerships, and international donor support. Ensuring a stable financial base is vital for the plan's longevity.

Program management; efficient and accountable management is the backbone of any successful conservation plan. The National Rhino Recovery and Action Plan establishes a clear framework for program management, including regular evaluations, adaptive management strategies, and performance metrics.

As part of the plan, a key intensive protection zone will be established. This area will receive special attention and resources to ensure the safety and growth of the rhino population. Stringent anti-poaching measures, habitat restoration, and community engagement will be the focus within this zone. With clear targets and a commitment to collaborative efforts, this plan represents a significant step towards the preservation of the rhino species leading to a secure brighter future for the black rhinos.