

## Miscellany

### More Land For White Rhino In the S. Sudan

WITH the assistance of various outside organisations, the Government of Sudan is going ahead with the creation of several new national parks and reserves in the Southern Sudan. Chief of these will be Boma, in East Equatoria, an area known for its white-eared cob which migrate through here and the country bordering on the Ethiopian Provinces of Gemu Gofa and Kaffa. The latter has its own wildlife sanctuary, the Omo National Park, lying further to the East.

Development of this area at Boma will be financed by the Frankfurt and New York Zoological Societies, and much of the preliminary reconnaissance work had already been accomplished by Peter McClinton, who was based at Juba. Responsibility now lies with the Ministry of Wildlife, Fisheries and Tourism of the Southern Sudan.

Interviewed on her return from a recent mission to the Sudan, Dr. Kes Hillman, of the "Rhino Group", told "Africana" that she had been pleased to note that a reserve is also to be developed around Shambe. This is one of the most important areas for the Northern White Rhino remaining in Eastern Africa and will contain some 1,000 of the species.

At first there will be a "core area" only 166 sq kms in extent, but this is to be expanded later to some 800 sq kms. Even then, Dr. Hillman considers this will not comprise a complete ecosystem and some of the

surrounding land will also have to be acquired to safeguard the future of the rhino at Shambe, which she considers of major importance, especially since the old Nimule Reserve now has so few White rhinos remaining that they are not enough to form a viable group.

Funds for developing the Shambe Reserve are expected to be forthcoming from the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (I.U.C.N.) and the World Wildlife Fund, with some help also coming from Italy.

Shambe is expected to become, along with the nearby Garamba Reserve in Zaire and an area in the Central African Republic, the three most important places for the preservation of the Northern White Rhino, now one of the most endangered species in Africa.

According to Dr. Hillman other reserves being developed in the Southern Sudan include three forest areas close to the Zaire border, Bengeng Gai, Bire Kapatous and Forest, which contain some bongo as well as giant eland and other forest fauna. Funding for developing these reserves is coming from the New York Zoological Society.

A mountain park is planned in the Imatong Mountains which run along the Sudan border with Uganda and rise to over 3,000 metres.

Dr. Hillman, who has completed her field research with a visit to Zimbabwe, is now compiling her study on the state of rhinos throughout Africa.

### New British Bill Is Queried

PROPOSED new legislation to be introduced by the British Government with the intention of protecting the countryside from further destruction, is ironically drawing much criticism from environmentalists, who claim that the Bill will do more harm than good.

According to Geoffrey Lean, writing in the "Observer", a major campaign has already been launched against the Bill, which has been tabled in Parliament by the Minister for the Environment, Mr. Tom King. He called it a "a major step forward for the protection of wildlife and their habitats", but environmental organisations fear it will not only result in the loss of many important wildlife areas, but also destroy large tracts of moorland and prevent free access to many places by closing existing footpaths.

Sir Peter Scott, now Britain's "elder statesman" of conservation, has stated "We are facing an unprecedented catastrophe—the loss of our countryside", and a prominent campaigner for the "Friends of the Earth", Charles Secrett, says, "By the time anyone gets

round to another Bill, there will be nothing worth saving".

Main criticism is that the proposed legislation will be too weak to accomplish anything and too much power will be in the hands of landowners, especially farmers, who will be permitted to make "improvements" which will help agricultural yields, but endanger wildlife. There is much support for the legislation which will tighten up the rules protecting birds, by banning "unsportsmanlike" hunting practices, such as machine-gunning foxes and hunting birds from helicopters, but there are strong reservation over a clause permitting farmers to kill protected birds found destroying crops.

There are strong fears that this relaxation might be abused and result in the disappearance of some species.

### "Whales—No Buzzing!"

WHALES off the coast of South Africa are to be protected from harassment during the breeding season, under a new Government ban recently applied. The law will also cover harassment from speed boats "buzzing" the whales in the sheltered waters around Capetown.

The Chief aim is to protect the Southern Right Whale, which migrate north from Antarctic waters to breed in warmer waters off South Africa.

### "World Heritage" List

Tanzania's famed Ngorongoro Crater has been included in the "World Heritage List" drawn up by the United Nations as an inventory of historic, cultural and natural heritages of mankind. Among other natural features all over the world are the Galapagos Islands, off the coast of Ecuador, Canada's Dinosaur Park and Banff National Park, the Grand Canyon and Yellowstone Parks in the US.

The Convention set up to safeguard these sites was a sequel to the UN Conference on the Human Environment, held in Stockholm in 1972. Once a country's nomination of a site is accepted, the state concerned can benefit from a \$1.5 million World Heritage Fund.

A total of 53 countries are signatories to this Convention including 16 African states, but according to the official list, Kenya is not among the signatories so far.

### ZAMBIA JOINS CONVENTION

The campaign to save Zambia's rhino population from extinction received a boost with the announcement in Geneva that Zambia has become a member of the Convention that controls the international trade in endangered species.

A release from I.U.C.N. Headquarters points out that unless the illegal trade in Zambian rhino horn, and the organized poaching that feeds it, are checked soon Zambia's black rhino population—the greatest known surviving population—could be wiped out in a few years. Consequently, the saving of Zambia's rhinos has international significance.

Zambian membership of CITES (Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species) will now help customs officials around the world to control more effectively the trade in rhino horn which is currently fetching a retail price of up to US \$11,000 per kilo on the international black market. Recently two catches of more than 80 rhino horns were intercepted in West Germany—all came from Zambia.

A unique alliance involving the Government, conservation groups and Zambian industry was recently concluded to establish a \$3 million fund to pay for the anti-poaching campaign. Some of the money—an estimated \$100,000—will come from a new Zambian conservation coin issue.

The Zambian president, Dr Kenneth Kaunda, was presented personally with the first set of coins by IUCN's director general Dr Lee Talbot. President Kaunda—who also received a copy of the World Conservation Strategy—used the occasion to reiterate his Government's firm commitment to the conservation of Zambia's wildlife, and other living resources. During the lengthy interview with Director General in Lusaka, the two men explored ways in which IUCN can help Zambia improve its conservation capacity. This will include, for example, provision of expert assistance to draw up a Zambian conservation strategy.