
tween 24 and 29 November 2001. When the carcasses were found, the horns had been taken. Security was immediately intensified in the rhino range and in Tsavo East National Park as a whole. In early December 2001, the KWS intelligence team arrested one person in possession of three fresh-looking rhino horns in a Mombasa Hotel, presumably where he was arranging to sell the horns. His arrest led to that of another person in whose house the horns had been hidden. The coastal town of Mombasa is believed to be a major outlet for illegal trade in wildlife products.

The poachers appear to be well organized. In January 2002 poachers killed another two rhinos whose horns have not been recovered. This did not demoralize the determined KWS rangers. In mid-February,

they killed one poacher, arrested a second, and recovered a pair of rhino horns plus firearms and ammunition. Security has been tightened in all the rhino sanctuaries, and KWS is taking all necessary measures to prevent further poaching of rhinos. The search for the poachers, suspected to be of Somali origin and using G3 firearms, continues.

The Tsavo East incident is the first case of rhino poaching in a national park in over eight years, although two rhino mortalities caused by poaching were recorded in 2000: one in Lelata/Naikara near Masai Mara National Reserve and the other in the Kitchich area, between Maralal town and Samburu National Reserve in northern Kenya. Community scouts monitor these rhino populations and managed to recover the horns.

Reintroduction of white rhinos to the Moremi Game Reserve

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During the 1980s and early 1990s the first and substantial reintroduced population of white rhinos in Botswana (95 animals moved from Natal Parks Board from 1967 to 1980) was affected by poaching to such an extent that rhinos nearly became extinct in the country for a second time. Against a background of increased cross-border poaching, the Department of Wildlife and National Parks decided to translocate all the remaining rhinos into a secure sanctuary. Between 1994 and 1996 seven rhinos were captured at Chobe National Park and Moremi Game Reserve and translocated to Khama Rhino Sanctuary near Serowe. Reinforced by further animals moved from South Africa, the Khama Rhino Sanctuary population has increased to 18 animals. Two other nature reserves stocked with rhinos have since been established in the south-east and west of the country. In the last year there have been reports of one or two white rhinos moving over large areas in the north-east of Botswana, remnants from the original reintroduction of the 1970s.

In collaboration with a private concessionaire, the Department of Wildlife and National Parks has now reintroduced white rhinos to Moremi Game Reserve.

To date five rhinos have been successfully reintroduced. Three were purchased by the concessionaire from Mokolodi Nature Reserve, and a lonely single bull was relocated from Gaborone Game Reserve. The fifth animal was an isolated rhino captured from Chobe National Park and relocated in Moremi Game Reserve. The rhinos have adapted well to their new environment and have established territories. Currently the Department of Wildlife and National Parks is expecting 31 more white rhinos (19 females and 12 males) to be introduced into Moremi Game Reserve as part of an agreement to exchange roan antelope for white rhinos from South Africa National Parks. The addition of this second group of rhinos into Moremi Game Reserve will form a viable breeding population in the area, which has very good expansion potential for developing a large wild population. A critical area of concern to the Department of Wildlife and National Parks is the security of these reintroduced rhinos. Measures have been taken to ensure their safety: the rhinos are being accorded maximum protection through high-intensity ground monitoring and surveillance, in addition to daily routine water-borne and aerial patrols.