

implementation of the second of AERSG's Harare recommendations, just 7 months later – no mean feat when one considers the slow turning of bureaucratic wheels. Hopefully, the project will be in full swing before the dry season in Garamba gets well underway, so that a start can be made on re-vamping the anti-poaching operations before the poaching intensifies.

The question still remains: what specific action should be taken to ensure the survival of Garamba's rhinos' the subject of AERSG's first and priority recommendation?

The IZCN/IUCN Rehabilitation Programme is not designed to fulfil this objective and the Project Document clearly states that additional action of some form is necessary if the rhino population is to be saved. What this action should be, and who should carry it out, remains a thorny question, and there is little doubt that the various alternatives will be a topic of lively discussion at the forthcoming AERSG meeting in Nairobi in December.

Robert Malpas

News in Brief

CONSERVATION OF ELEPHANT IN SIERRA LEONE

With only 1.2% of the original forest zone left in Sierra Leone, the decline of endemic fauna is the most dramatic of all the west African coastal countries. A recent survey by Drs. Harold Roth and Gunter Merz, carried out in the country under the auspices of SLENCA (Sierra Leone Environment and Nature Conservation Association), and with partial funding from WWF/IUCN, has looked at what effect this massive reduction in the habitat has had on the Sierra Leone forest elephant population.

The report shows how agriculture has restricted the elephants to small groups. Only those in Gola East and Gola North Reserves (150 animals, occupying 50,000 ha) have a chance of long-term survival, and only if the present trend of at least 5% population decrease each year is stopped.

The research team considered that a comprehensive long-term management and development plan for these reserves is now vital. Recommended conservation measures include: marking boundaries, strategically posting game wardens and patrols, establishing a buffer zone, and providing access to visitors. The team felt that controlled rotational forestry in Gola North would be acceptable, so long as a hunting ban is effectively maintained.

Drs. Roth and Merz recommended that Gola West and East be proclaimed a National Park, and Gola North a game reserve. The feasibility of such legislation is, however, uncertain. In recent years, Sierra Leone has experienced a dramatic economic decline, and there is a great need for foreign exchange. Timber is a major source of income for the nation and, with so little forest left which is suitable for logging, it seems unlikely that the government will set aside major logging concessions in Gola West and East for wildlife conservation. The recent development of a major saw mill and logging complex adjacent to Gola, funded by West Germany, will inevitably increase the pressure on these forests still further and is an additional economic argument for proceeding with existing logging plans.

DEMAND FOR EEC IVORY BAN

The European Environmental Bureau (EEB) on 30 June 1983, issued a statement demanding that the EEC propose a regulation banning the import of ivory into the Community, similar to the regulation concerning whale products.

C.A.R. ELEPHANT POPULATION THREATENED BY POACHING

Recent findings from Parc National Gounda St. Floris indicate that if efforts are not made to improve anti-poaching operations, the park's elephant population of about 2,500 could disappear within several years. It is estimated that some 532 elephants were injured or killed during this year alone. The report, compiled by a WWF/IUCN project team working in the park, gives a detailed account of the previous year's poaching activities in Gounda. 32 fresh elephant carcasses, with tusks removed, were found by the research team, predominately in the dry season from March to May. There were spear wounds in the hind quarters and autopsies revealed haemorrhaging by an unknown source of poisoning. Horse tracks leading to camps were sometimes observed.

Besides monitoring the population, other research is being carried out on the elephants. R.G. Ruggiero is carrying out an elephant time budget study. By compiling five to six hundred hours of observations on various individuals, and statistically analysing, a clearer picture of habitat utilization will emerge. Useful dietary information is also collected and the species of plant noted.

In Southern Gounda, K.L. Nelson is investigating the diurnal and seasonal variation in elephant movements. During the cold season (Jan/Feb), groups of 50 gather in the floodplain and are active, except around mid-day. In the hot dry season (March/April), groups of less than 15 rest near the wooded escarpment, moving only at night. Unfortunately, Nelson has also observed that elephants will return to poached areas less than one month after killings have occurred. However, knowledge of their seasonal and diurnal movements will aid in their protection.

BURUNDI HURRIES TO EXPORT IVORY

There is pressure for Burundi to export its ivory to Belgium before January 1st when all EEC countries join CITES. Attempts to get Burundi to sign CITES still proceed.

Burundi has only one elephant (in a zoo) but twelve tonnes of ivory per month are exported. This ivory probably originates from neighbouring countries: Zaire, Tanzania and perhaps as far as Somalia.

PILANESBERG NEW HOME FOR BLACK RHINOS

Eight black rhinos *Diceros bicornis* were successfully translocated from the Umfolozi and Hluhluwe Game Reserve in Zululand to Pilanesberg Game Reserve in Bophuthatswana this year. These eight animals (5 males and 3 females) now bring the total number of black rhinos at Pilanesberg to 21, including two calves which have been born at Pilanesberg.

Special thanks are due to the Natal Parks Board which is subsidizing heavily the black rhino introduction programme at Pilanesberg as a conservation measure for the species.

P. Hancock

CITES CONFERENCE IN BOTSWANA

The fourth meeting of the Conference of the parties to the Convention for International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES), was held in Gaborone, Botswana from 19-30 April.

Parties discussed the role of the Central African Republic in the ivory trade. Although all ivory leaving the country had valid export permits, the quantities involved are much greater than could be accounted for by the hunting quota. It seems likely that a lot of ivory may be imported without proper documentation and then re-exported. The Secretariat thought that this situation could apply in other States and asked for suggestions as to possible control measures. None was immediately forthcoming and the matter was referred to the Technical Committee (TEC).

Also discussed was the TEC document on Trade in African Elephant Ivory which addressed the concern of many Parties over the practicability or the usefulness of licensing all trade in worked ivory. Such a process imposes an extremely heavy administrative burden whilst, the Head of WTMU noted, the trade statistics for worked ivory are in any case useless for monitoring purposes. TEC proposed that: the only pieces of ivory that should be controlled in trade would be those weighing more than 1/2kg; that, in producing annual reports, Parties should indicate the numbers of substantially whole tusks in shipments and indicate the weights of consignments; and that the controls applying to personal effects (under Article VII para. 3) apply as strictly as possible but only in relation to items of more than 1/2kg. However, India noted (Doc. 4.23.1) that large consignments of very small pieces of worked African ivory were exported from India and might conceal Appendix 1 Asian ivory, so that licensing controls were necessary. India also claimed dependence on other Parties to detect illegal imports of worked Indian ivory in shipments of African ivory but noted it was impossible to tell the difference between them. The TEC proposal was rejected. A draft Resolution was presented by a number of African delegations, recognising the problems of India and proposing a phase-out of ivory trade with India so that, from 1 January 1986, no Party would permit the import of any ivory, worked or unworked, from India. The sponsors of this draft Resolution withdrew it without discussion and another Resolution was adopted (Conf. 4.14) which directed TEC to draw up guidelines for controlling the trade in worked ivory as quickly as possible.

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ZAMBIA ENACTS STRICTER LEGISLATION FOR IVORY AND RHINO POACHING

On 24th December 1982, by an Act of Parliament, Zambia introduced new and tougher penalties to counter the poaching of both elephant and black rhinoceros and the trafficking in their ivory and horns.

The new legislation entitled the National Parks and Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 1982 (Act 32 of 1982) amends the principal National Parks and Wildlife Act as follows:-

- (a) For the hunting, wounding, or molesting of any elephant or rhinoceros an offender receives imprisonment, without the option of a fine, for a term not exceeding ten years.
- (b) Similarly, the possession of, or selling, buying, importing or exporting of any prescribed trophy (which includes ivory and rhino horn) brings a first offender a fine not exceeding ten thousand kwacha or imprisonment not exceeding ten years or both fine and term of imprisonment, while for a person's second or subsequent such offence, the penalty is imprisonment, without the option of a fine, for not more than ten years.

P.S.M. Berry

PRESIDENT NYERERE LAUNCHES RHINO CAMPAIGN

A nation-wide campaign to save the rhino was launched by H.E. Dr. J.K. Nyerere, President of Tanzania, on 15th June 1983 at the College of African Wildlife Management, Mweka, Moshi at the climax of the College's 20th anniversary celebrations.

The campaign was launched in line with international public awareness on the plight of the black rhinoceros whose number has dwindled drastically in the last decade. By launching the campaign the Government of Tanzania joined forces with other nations as well as other leading conservation organizations in a coordinated emergency effort to save this magnificent species.

The campaign aims at educating the masses on the importance of conservation of rhinos and other species. The methods being applied include distribution of posters, radio programmes, newspaper articles, choir songs, film shows and music hits composed by local jazz bands. In addition, special "khangas" and T-shirts have been printed in an effort to bring the message home.

Mr. F.M.R. Lwezaula
Director of Wildlife

We welcome articles for the next newsletter. Articles should cover points of information, or topical interest, relevant to elephant and rhino conservation, and should be no longer than 1500 words. We will publish suitable black and white photos and graphics and may edit some articles. The deadline for submission to the next newsletter is June 1st 1984.

Lucy Vigne
Editor