

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

NO. 1105

22 AUGUST 2019

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT: BIODIVERSITY ACT, 2004
(ACT NO. 10 OF 2004)

NON-DETRIMENT FINDINGS

CONSULTATION IN TERMS OF SECTION 62(3) OF THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT:
BIODIVERSITY ACT, 2004 (ACT NO.10 OF 2004)

I, Barbara Dallas Creecy, Minister of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries, hereby, under section 62A of the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act, 2004 (Act No. 10 of 2004), give notice of my intention to repeal non-detriment findings for *Ceratotherium simum simum* (white rhinoceros) made by the Scientific Authority, published under Government Notice No. 575 in the Government Gazette No. 40021 of 27 May 2016; and, under section 62(3) of the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act, 2004 (Act No.10 of 2004), give notice of my intention to publish non-detriment findings for *Ceratotherium simum simum* (white rhinoceros) made by the Scientific Authority in the Schedule hereto.

Members of the public are invited to submit to the Scientific Authority, within 30 days from the date of the publication of the notice in the *Gazette*, written scientific information relating to the non-detriment findings to the following addresses:

By post to: Chair: Scientific Authority
South African National Biodiversity Institute
Attention: Ms M Pfab
Private Bag X101
PRETORIA
0001

By hand at: 2 Cussonia Avenue, Brummeria, Pretoria, 0001
By e-mail: m.pfab@sanbi.org.za
By fax: 086 555 9863

Comments received after the closing date may not be considered.



MS B D CREECY, MP
MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES

SCHEDULE

Non-detriment finding for *Ceratotherium simum simum* (Southern white rhinoceros)

Reference Number: Cer_sim_Jul2018

Date: 12 July 2018

Issued by the Scientific Authority of South Africa

Summary of findings

The South African population of *Ceratotherium simum simum* (white rhinoceros) is included in Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), for the exclusive purpose of allowing international trade in live animals to appropriate and acceptable destinations and the export of hunting trophies. All other specimens, including the horn, are deemed to be specimens of species included in Appendix I, meaning that the export of specimens for commercial purposes is prohibited (Article III). However, specimens bred in captivity for commercial purposes are deemed to be specimens of species included in Appendix II (Article VII) of CITES and therefore may be traded. In terms of Article IV of the Convention, an export permit shall only be granted for an Appendix II species when a Scientific Authority of the State of export has advised that such export will not be detrimental to the survival of that species. This document details the undertaking of a non-detriment finding (NDF) for *C. simum simum*, and is based on the best available information, current as of March 2018.

The white rhinoceros is a long-lived species with both sexes living between 30 and 40 years. The species has a low reproductive rate, with females in wild populations giving birth to their first calf on average between 6 and 7 years. Inter-calving intervals average 2.9 years, with a gestation period of approximately 16 months. Males are capable of mating at a similar age range to females, but due to social constraints tend to only mate successfully after the age of 10 – 12 years. A relatively adaptable species, being able to survive in a variety of grassland and savannah habitats, the white rhinoceros favours short grasses on grazing lawns, but can switch to taller relatively fibrous bunch grasses when short grass is unavailable. They are thus able to persist and reproduce in nutrient poor areas, as evidenced by their current distribution. Individuals disperse rapidly into new areas and in unfenced areas can move over very large distances. The species is conservation dependent, occurring solely in protected areas and on game farms and game reserves, but it is tolerant of human activity and can be ranched under semi-intensive management.

The distribution of the white rhinoceros in South Africa is fragmented, as all subpopulations exist in fenced protected areas or private/community game farms and reserves. However, it is widespread, occurring in more than 350 state, private and communal game farms and reserves across all nine provinces and is regarded as a common species in South Africa. The total area occupied by white rhinoceros within South Africa exceeds 49,000 km², of which approximately 18,000 km² is private or communal land. According to data gathered from a survey of rhinoceroses on private and state land by the IUCN African Rhinoceros Specialist Group (AfRSG), the total South African wild white rhinoceros population comprises approximately 17,208 individuals (as at the end of 2015) of which 12,273 (72%) and 4,735 (28%) occur on state-owned and private land respectively. The largest subpopulations occur in the greater Kruger National Park (KNP) (which incorporates adjacent private and state reserves) and Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. The Kruger National Park (KNP) subpopulation was estimated at 8,875 in 2015. An additional 1,517 (as of 2017) white rhinoceros reside in South Africa's largest captive breeding facility under semi-intensive management.

Analyses undertaken by AfRSG indicate that the national average growth rate of the white rhinoceros population was just over 7% from 1991 to 2012. A number of key events apparently contributed to the rapid increase in the national population of white rhinoceros since the late 1800s when no more than 50 white rhinoceroses survived in the iMfolozi Game Reserve in what was then Natal, including the development of chemical capture drugs, mass translocations, and policy changes both locally and internationally that allowed for private ownership, live sale auctions and limited trophy hunting. These factors have until recently created sufficient economic incentives for

private ownership, thereby facilitating the expansion of rhinoceros range and numbers. A 2015 publication by the AfRSG indicates a levelling off or possibly a slight decline in the national population. This is due primarily to a decline in numbers in KNP, which has suffered the brunt of rhinoceros poaching since 2007, as well as significant numbers of white rhinoceros being translocated from wild populations to smaller secure areas where the animals are subjected to semi-intensive / intensive management. While currently stable, the future trend in the population is unpredictable, and could increase by 1.9% or decrease by 3.9% after 5 years depending on future poaching levels.

Detailed recent quantitative data exist on white rhinoceros numbers, poaching rates and population performances for most subpopulations over the past 30 years due to a process of confidential annual white rhinoceros status reporting to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Rhinoceros Management Group (RMG), as well as regular reporting to IUCN/SSC AfRSG. The monitoring method employed in the KNP is primarily one of conducting block counts, while formal distance sampling using line and point transects is employed in the Hluhluwe iMfolozi Park in KwaZulu-Natal. Monitoring of the remainder of the national herd is variable with many private land owners monitoring their rhinoceroses closely. Even though there are some concerns regarding adequate budgets to conduct regular counts and implement intensive monitoring on the ground, very good population estimates exist and in most cases direct population estimates are used to monitor the effects of harvest. The quality of monitoring in some subpopulations has recently declined as field staff are having to increasingly focus on anti-poaching, with less time available for other conservation activities such as monitoring.

The continuing loss of rhinoceroses to poaching for their horn is currently the major threat to South Africa's white rhinoceros population. Poaching of wild white rhinoceroses has been increasing each year from 2007 (when 13 were poached), and reached a peak in 2014 when 1,151 were poached in the country (an estimated 6.5% of the wild population). Poaching has since declined slightly with an estimated 1,009 wild white rhinoceroses (approximately 6% of the national population) poached in 2016. This is likely to indicate a positive response to the anti-poaching interventions employed nationally and specifically in KNP. However, the number of incursions into KNP continues to increase, so should the current measures to curb poaching be removed, poaching of white rhinoceroses in KNP would increase dramatically. There is also evidence that poaching has increased in other hotspots, particularly in northern KwaZulu-Natal. The threat of rhinoceros poaching is thus currently considered to be substantial, though reversible. If the current funding and resources were to be removed the severity of the threat would increase substantially. In order for the current efforts to continue, significant financial inputs from external sources are required.

Since 2010, the South African government has launched a variety of initiatives in collaboration with various stakeholders to address the poaching threat and ensure the long-term conservation of the species, and in 2014 Cabinet adopted an integrated four-pronged approach to curb rhinoceros poaching. A national white rhinoceros strategy was approved in 2000 and in December 2015 a national Biodiversity Management Plan (BMP) for white rhinoceros was gazetted for implementation in terms of section 43 of the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act, 2004 (Act No. 10 of 2004) (NEMBA). This plan will form the basis for greater coordination between existing and future plans and is informed by the National Strategy for the Safety and Security of Rhino Populations in South Africa as well as the Rhinoceros Issues Management Report.

A high proportion (72%) of the white rhinoceros population is generally well-managed within protected areas, with offtakes (primarily translocations of animals) managed in terms of ecological management plans. The white rhinoceros subpopulation in KNP (52% of the national population) is managed in accordance with an adaptive management plan. Management of white rhinoceroses on private land is undertaken for different purposes and is thus more variable. In KwaZulu-Natal, a management strategy and a status reporting framework currently supports fixed stocking rate management and therefore constant harvest management for some of the subpopulations in the province.

Ceratotherium simum simum is listed as protected in terms of section 56 of NEMBA and various provincial ordinances and acts provide further legislative protection. Permits are therefore required to undertake a variety of activities, e.g. hunting, keeping, selling and other forms of direct use. The white rhinoceros population in South

Africa is generally subjected to two forms of legal offtake, namely management removals of animals and trophy hunting. An estimated 1.4% of the national herd is translocated from protected areas annually. Although the removal of live animals for translocation purposes is not considered to be a form of harvest since these animals are not permanently removed from the national population, there are some international exports of live animals. Between 2005 and 2016 a total of 774 live white rhinoceroses were exported from South Africa, constituting approximately 22% of the total exports of this species from South Africa during this time period. Live animals were exported primarily for re-introduction purposes (33% of live exports), to zoos (27% of live exports) and breeding facilities (26% of live exports). The main destination countries were Namibia (38% of live exports), China (32% of live exports), and Botswana (7% of live exports), with Namibia and Botswana importing live white rhinoceroses mainly for re-introduction purposes, and China mainly for zoos and breeding facilities.

Legal hunting of white rhinoceroses, typically on private land, is mostly economically motivated. Prior to 2005, the number of white rhinoceroses hunted was generally a function of market forces, with the market supporting the legal hunting of an average of 36 – 70 animals annually. After 2005 the number of rhinoceroses hunted increased, and by 2011 an average of 116 animals (0.6% of the national population) were hunted, with many of these hunts being undertaken by non-traditional hunters ("pseudo hunters"), most likely in an attempt to source the horn. Through better regulation introduced in 2012, the occurrence of "pseudo hunts" has reduced considerably and since then an average of only 70 white rhinoceroses (0.43% of the national population) have been legally hunted annually. This clamp down on pseudo hunting was however followed by an escalation in the poaching rate. White rhinoceros hunting trophies exported from South Africa between 2005 and 2015 were primarily imported by the United States of America (40%), China (10%), Poland (8%) and the Russian Federation (8%); in total 1,115 trophies. Setting a hunting quota has been unnecessary to date as the legal offtake has been well within sustainable levels. Trophy hunting removes surplus adult males, whilst generating important conservation revenue (while poaching targets animals of all ages and sexes).

A moratorium to prohibit the sale of rhinoceros horn or rhinoceros horn products within the country was implemented in February 2009 to afford the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) an opportunity to develop and implement permanent measures aimed at eliminating the illegal international trade in rhinoceros horns. However, the moratorium was set aside by the High Court of South Africa in November 2015, thereby rendering the domestic trade in rhinoceros horn within the borders of the country legal once again. In order to effectively manage the legal domestic trade in rhinoceros horn, draft regulatory measures were published for public comment in February 2017, but the regulations are yet to be finalized. In March 2018, the Private Rhino Owners Association (PROA) launched Rhino Horn Trade Africa (RHTA), an initiative that will facilitate the legal trade of rhinoceros horn via an online trade desk, which aims to provide a managed, efficient platform from which genuine buyers and sellers can trade in legal, humanely acquired rhinoceros horn.

The amended Norms and Standards for the Marking of Rhinoceros and Rhinoceros Horn and for the Hunting of Rhinoceros for Trophy Hunting Purposes (published in April 2012, Gazette No. 35248) require that all rhinoceros hunts are attended by conservation officials. Provinces indicate that this legal requirement is being complied with. The regulations further require that a DNA sample must be collected from each animal, as well as from both horns. A possession permit as well as a DNA certificate is issued to the owner of the rhinoceros horn and all DNA samples are stored on the RHODIS database to ensure traceability. The system is well managed and rhinoceros horn stockpiles are regularly audited. There is a high level of confidence in the monitoring of both illegal and legal harvests of white rhinoceroses in state protected areas, which constitute 72% of the national herd. Rhinoceroses are individually known in smaller properties where there is also a high confidence in carcass detection rates.

The revenue generated by the state and the private sector from owning, selling, translocating, viewing (via ecotourism) and the legal hunting of white rhinoceros has greatly contributed to the conservation of this species in South Africa. The white rhinoceros population is now 10 times larger since trophy hunting was introduced in 1968. Due to the significant economic benefits of hunting to game farmers (worth approximately \$19 million over the period 2004 – 2008), together with live sales and ecotourism, the private sector has increasingly stocked these animals, effectively maintaining rapid meta-population growth and contributing to the expansion of the species' range, with a further approximate 18,000 km² added to the conservation estate in South Africa. The

private sector in South Africa now conserves more rhinoceroses than there are black and white rhinoceroses in the whole of the rest of Africa. Live sales of surplus animals to the private sector have also been highly beneficial to conservation agencies, generating vital conservation revenue and preventing overstocking in established subpopulations.

Due to the increased rate of poaching, the cost of rhinoceros security has increased substantially in recent years. At the same time demand for trophy hunting has been declining while the commercial international sale of legal rhinoceros horn remains prohibited under CITES. These factors have contributed to a negative shift in the cost benefit ratio of owning wild white rhinoceroses, leading to a reduction in the live sale price and reduced incentives to buy and conserve wild white rhinoceroses. The result has been that many private rhinoceros owners are showing an increasing tendency to disinvest in the species, especially in the provinces of Limpopo, Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal. Given that approximately 28% of the national herd is kept on 18,000 km² of privately-owned land, the loss of private sector interest in keeping white rhinoceros is a significant concern for the conservation of the species and its habitat. The reduced introduction of rhinoceroses to new areas is expected to result in a decline in the meta-population growth rate, the total population size as well as the financial income to the conservation agencies that rely upon funds generated from rhinoceros sales to conserve and protect rhinoceroses. Income of the three largest rhinoceros sellers earned from the sale of white rhinoceros has reduced from a total of ~R100 million in 2009 when 370 rhinoceroses were sold to R20 million in 2014 when only 60 were sold. Furthermore, between 2009 and 2012 there was a reduction in the average price of white rhinoceros, from R365 000 per animal in 2009 to R258 000 in 2012. Total loss of revenue is estimated at R373 million. Interestingly, in 2012 suggestions that South Africa would consider submitting a proposal to the 17th CoP to CITES to trade in rhinoceros horn saw a temporary recovery in the average price for a white rhinoceros.

The 72% of the national herd that is kept in state controlled protected areas is strictly protected, with legal hunting negligible (<10 per year). However, the high poaching rate is indicative of the limited effectiveness of these protected areas, and a number of key subpopulations are showing signs of decline despite the significant resources that have been deployed towards gaining control over illegal activities. Poaching has occurred in most protected areas with some, notably the KNP, struggling to combat these illegal activities. This primarily arises from the long permeable border with Mozambique and that country's inadequate legal and wildlife protection systems. Improved protection measures (enhanced intelligence gathering and effective prosecution with deterrent sentences), as well as active regional cooperation (especially from Mozambique), are required to combat poaching. The international ban on the commercial trade in rhinoceros horn, in place now for more than 40 years, has also failed to effectively provide strict protection to the species, despite the numerous anti-poaching measures implemented in South Africa. These measures importantly fail to address the cause of the escalating poaching levels (high demand for black market horn at high prices, i.e. the low supply to demand ratio, coupled with poverty and unemployment in rural communities).

It is unlikely that the current investment in the protection of rhinoceroses from current sources (government and donors) can be sustained in the long term. It is estimated that between R0.87 billion and R1.29 billion per annum is required to secure rhinoceroses in the state owned protected area system, while private game farms and reserves have spent collectively approximately R2 billion on the management and specifically the protection of rhinoceroses between 2009 and 2017. Furthermore, a large portion of the rhinoceros security and enforcement budgets in a number of provinces are funded by international donors and are therefore at risk of donor fatigue. It is thus important that alternative sources of revenue be explored to protect rhinoceroses. There is a certain economic value that could be derived from rhinoceros horn that could be allocated to the protection of the species. At present, the majority of private reserves have to fund their own security measures, but income derived from the sale of rhinoceros horn would assist both government and the private sector to continue funding anti-poaching measures. As a result of the continuing illegal trade in rhinoceros horn and the apparent failure of the CITES trade ban, there have been calls from some segments of the conservation community to reconsider current policies, including the 40-year ban on the international trade in rhinoceros products, and to establish a legal, well-regulated international market for trading rhinoceros horn. A plethora of peer-reviewed papers recently published in the scientific literature also argue for a legal trade in rhinoceros horn.

In conclusion, the non-detriment finding undertaken for the white rhinoceros, as summarized in the analyses of the key considerations above, demonstrates that legal international trade in live animals to appropriate and acceptable destinations and the export of hunting trophies poses a low risk to the survival of this species in South Africa (Fig. 1 and 2) and should be allowed to continue. In fact, legal hunting of white rhinoceros incentivizes the conservation and protection of the species in South Africa, and legal and illegal harvests combined are currently still within sustainable levels. It is however highly unlikely that current investment from government, external donors and private rhinoceros owners in the protection of this species can be sustained in the long term, and it is recommended that a legal trade in rhinoceros horn as an alternative source of funds be explored. The export, for primarily non-commercial purposes, of rhinoceros horn that has been legally sourced, either through natural mortalities and/or horn harvest from wild populations, or from captive breeding facilities, will not be detrimental to the survival of the species in the wild provided that (1) the income derived from these exports contributes directly to the conservation of wild rhinoceros populations and (2) the captive breeding facilities meet the Scientific Authority's approved criteria for the captive breeding of white rhinoceros. Considering the data and information presented in this NDF, it is clear that *C. simum simum* does not meet the biological criteria for inclusion in Appendix I of CITES and a proposal to effect a straight Appendix II listing (i.e. without an annotation) can be considered. The registration of captive breeding facilities in accordance with CITES Resolution Conf. 12.10 (Rev. CoP15) in order to allow for the commercial trade in rhinoceros horn can also be considered.

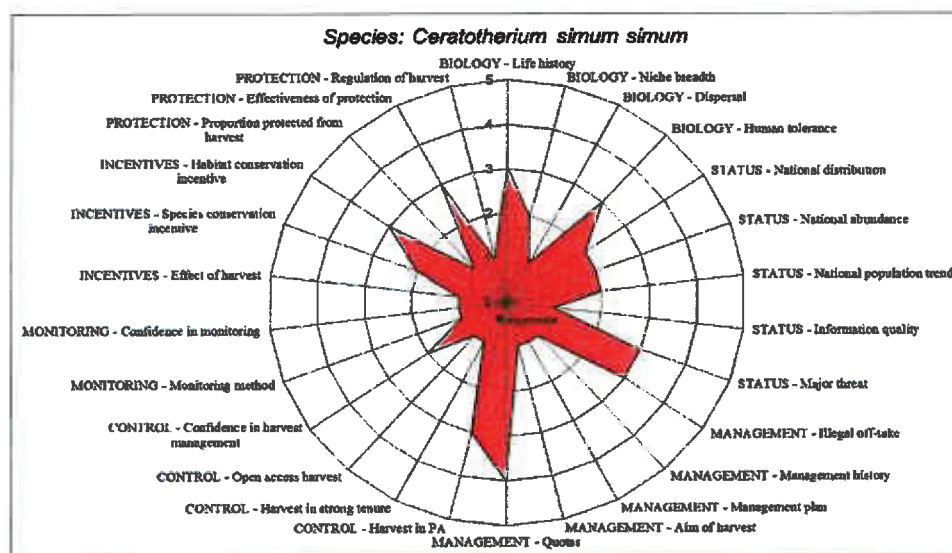


Figure 1. Radar chart summarizing the non-detriment finding assessment undertaken for *Ceratotherium simum simum* (southern white rhinoceros) in accordance with the CITES NDF checklist. Explanations of scores given are detailed in Table 1. Higher scores are indicative of higher risks to the species. The limited shaded area in the radar chart demonstrates an overall low risk to the species.

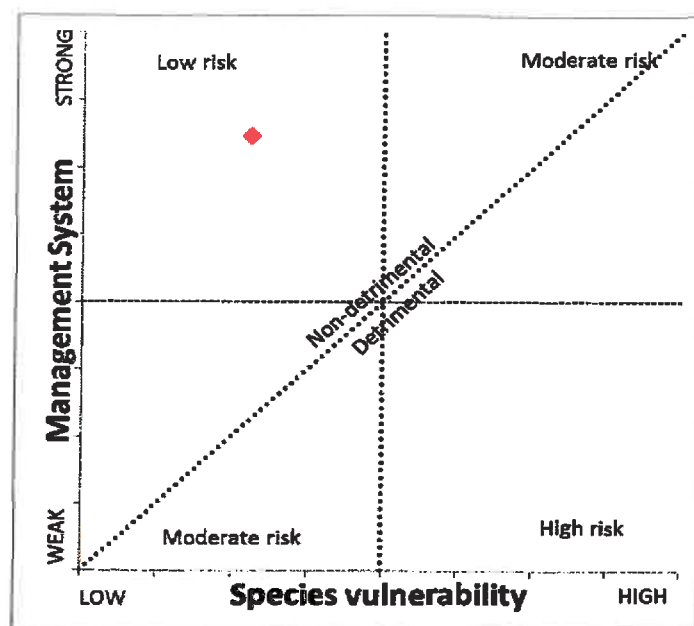


Figure 2: The risk of trading in *Ceratotherium simum simum* (southern white rhinoceros), as represented by the relationship between species vulnerability (biology and status) and the management system to which the species is subjected (management, control, monitoring, incentives and protection). The figure demonstrates that the species is at a low risk, and that trade is not detrimental.

Table 1. Detailed NDF assessment for *Ceratotherium simum simum* (southern white rhinoceros) undertaken in accordance with the CITES NDF checklist. Scores assigned to each question are indicated (bold text and shaded blocks) along with detailed explanations/justifications where relevant. Higher scores are indicative of higher risks to the species.

| Biological characteristics | | |
|---|--|----------|
| 1. Life history: What is the species' life history? | High reproductive rate, long-lived | 1 |
| | High reproductive rate, short-lived | 2 |
| | Low reproductive rate, long-lived | 3 |
| | Low reproductive rate, short-lived | 4 |
| | Uncertain | 5 |
| <p>The white rhinoceros is long-lived with both sexes living to approximately 30 – 40 years in the wild. White rhinoceros are sedentary and semi-social. Cohesive groups consist mostly of mother-offspring associations, or small groups of sub-adults (Owen-Smith, 1988). Adult bulls are generally solitary. Females give birth to their first calf on average between 6 and 7 years in wild populations (range 4.1 to 13.5 years) (AfsRG, 2018, In prep.). Inter-calving intervals average 2.9 years (1.7 - 5 years), with a gestation period of approximately 16 months. Males are capable of mating at a similar age range to females, but due to social constraints tend to only mate successfully after 10 - 12 years old (Shrader & Owen-Smith, 2002). Youngsters can become independent of their mother around the time of the birth of the next offspring, when aged between 2.2 and 3.3 years (Owen-Smith, 1988). White rhinoceros thus have a low reproductive rate.</p> | | |
| 2. Ecological adaptability: To what extent is the species adaptable (habitat, diet, environmental tolerance etc.)? | Extreme generalist | 1 |
| | Generalist | 2 |
| | Specialist | 3 |
| | Extreme specialist | 4 |
| | Uncertain | 5 |
| <p>The white rhinoceros is a relatively adaptable species which is able to survive in a variety of habitats from grassland to savannah, and inhabits areas with mean annual rainfall ranging from 350 mm per year to 1,500 mm per year. Juvenile mortality rates during the winter months on the Highveld are however high which is thought to be due to a combination of low temperatures and poor grazing quality. White rhinoceros favour short grasses on grazing lawns with short leafy <i>Themeda triandra</i> and broad leaved <i>Panicum maximum</i> and <i>P. deustum</i> growing under trees (Emslie, pers. com.), but can switch to taller relatively fibrous bunch grasses when short grass is unavailable. Grasslands growing on nutrient-poor soils tend to be avoided (Owen-Smith, 1988), and grazing in such areas predominates in nutrient hotspots such as around termitaria or along wetlands or drainage lines. They are thus able to persist and reproduce in nutrient poor areas, as evidenced by their current distribution. Favoured short grass species include <i>Panicum coloratum</i>, <i>Urochloa mosambicensis</i>, <i>Cynodon dactylon</i>, <i>Digitaria</i> spp. and <i>Sporobolus</i> spp. (Owen-Smith, 1988). About 35 other grass species are eaten to a lesser extent (Skinner & Chimimba, 2005), but species such as <i>Cymbopogon plurinodis</i>, <i>Bothriochloa insculpta</i> and <i>Aristida</i> spp. are avoided. They do not appear to compensate for seasonal declines in food quality by switching to other species or increasing the number of species eaten and may instead draw on fat reserves during the dry season (Shrader, <i>et al.</i>, 2006), or if possible feed higher-up in the catena where reserve grazing of taller <i>Themeda triandra</i> can occur (Emslie, pers. com.).</p> | | |

| | | |
|---|--|----------|
| 3. Dispersal efficiency: How efficient is the species' dispersal mechanism at key life stages? | Very good | 1 |
| | Good | 2 |
| | Medium | 3 |
| | Poor | 4 |
| | Uncertain | 5 |
| <p>Individual dispersal is a process that takes place at the juvenile stage. White rhinoceros calves generally leave their mothers from 2.5 – 3.5 years of age to form groupings with other adult females and/or other sub-adults, subsequently dispersing into new areas. Individuals have been known to move over distances of 40 – 50 km during drought conditions. White rhinoceros of all ages are known to disperse. Biological barriers however may inhibit their dispersal. Shrader and Owen-Smith (2002) suggest that the "buddy system" exemplified by shifting temporary associations among sub-adults, and between sub-adults and some adult females, could be important in ameliorating potential costs of dispersal into unfamiliar habitat. Males have non-overlapping territories which are known to range from 0.75 km² to 14 km² in typical savannahs. The boundaries of their home ranges are commonly aligned with topographic features such as rivers, watersheds or roads (Skinner & Chimimba, 2005).</p> | | |
| 4. Interaction with humans: Is the species tolerant to human activity other than harvest? | No interaction | 1 |
| | Pest / Commensal | 2 |
| | Tolerant | 3 |
| | Sensitive | 4 |
| | Uncertain | 5 |
| <p>The species is conservation dependent, occurring solely in protected areas and on game farms and reserves, but it is tolerant to local human activity and can be ranched under semi-intensive conditions. Under these conditions, where the density of animals is higher and regular anaesthetic procedures for management purposes and/or translocation are likely to increase stress levels, there is no detectable difference in cow fertility (Ververs, <i>et al.</i>, 2017). In addition, Badenhorst, <i>et al.</i> (2016) found that faecal glucocorticoid metabolite (fGCM) levels do not differ between ranched and free-ranging adult individuals, though routine dehorning procedures do result in short-term stress responses that dissipate after 72 hours (Badenhorst, <i>et al.</i>, 2016).</p> | | |
| National status | | |
| 5. National distribution: How is the species distributed nationally? | Widespread, contiguous in country | 1 |
| | Widespread, fragmented in country | 2 |
| | Restricted and fragmented | 3 |
| | Localized | 4 |
| | Uncertain | 5 |
| <p>The total area occupied by white rhinoceros within South Africa exceeds 49,000 km², of which approximately 18,000 km² is private or communal land. There are approximately 350 sub-populations of white rhinoceros in state, private or communal protected areas and game farms across all nine provinces of South Africa. The largest subpopulations occur in the greater Kruger National Park (KNP) (which incorporates adjacent private and state reserves) and Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park.</p> <p>Although the white rhinoceros population in South Africa is severely fragmented (as all sub-populations exist in fenced protected areas and are thus functionally genetically isolated), ongoing gene flow, through translocations among reserves, does occur in an unstructured manner.</p> | | |

| | | |
|---|---------------|----------|
| 6. National abundance: What is the abundance nationally? | Very abundant | 1 |
| | Common | 2 |
| | Uncommon | 3 |
| | Rare | 4 |
| | Uncertain | 5 |

Of all the African rhinoceroses, the southern white rhinoceros is the most abundant (Emslie, *et al.*, 2016), with total numbers far exceeding that of a minimum viable population (Reed, *et al.*, 2003). Currently there are approximately 20,375 (19,666 – 21,085 individuals) white rhinoceroses on the continent (Emslie *et al.*, 2016) of which approximately 90% occurred in South Africa in 2014 (Emslie *et al.*, 2016) (Fig. 3).

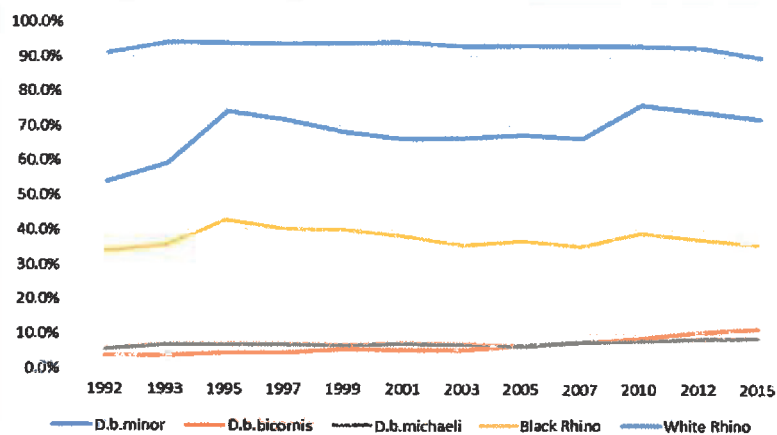


Figure 3: The estimated proportion of Africa's wild rhinoceros (both species) conserved by South Africa between 1992 and 2015 (Source: IUCN SSC African Rhino Specialist Group).

According to data gathered from a survey of rhinoceroses on private and state land by the SADC Rhino Management Group and data from the IUCN SSC's African Rhino Specialist Group (AfRSG), the total wild South African white rhinoceros population as of end 2015 was estimated at 17,208 individuals with 90% bootstrapped confidence levels of 16,549 – 17,863 (Fig. 4). Of these wild white rhinoceroses, 12,473 (72%) and 4,735 (28%) occurred on state-owned and private land respectively. As of the end of 2015 the KNP subpopulation was estimated at 8,875 with 95% CI of 8,365 – 9,337 (Ferreira, *et al.*, 2017). The KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) white rhinoceros population at the end of 2017, comprising 10 subpopulations in state protected areas and 32 subpopulations on private and communal land throughout the province, was estimated to be 2,676, with 2,136 animals in protected areas and 540 animals on private and communal land (Goodman, *et al.*, 2017).

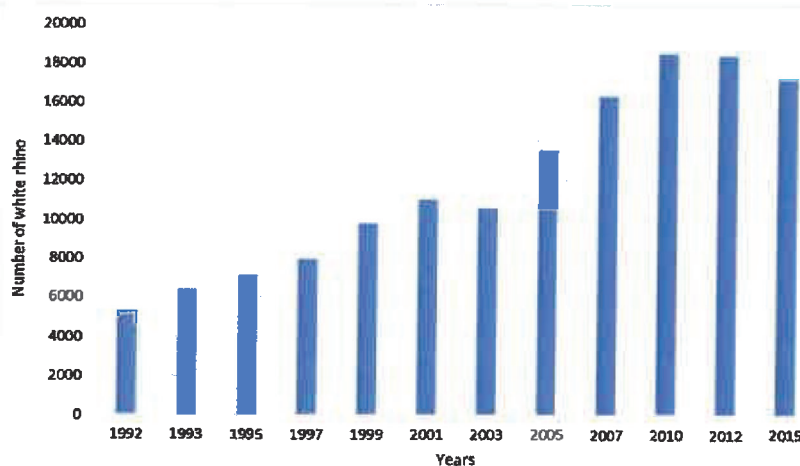


Figure 4: The estimated number of wild white rhinoceroses in South Africa from 1992 to 2015 (Source: IUCN SSC African Rhino Specialist Group).

The largest captive breeding operation for white rhinoceros has a population of 1,517 (as of November 2017) animals on an area of approximately 8,200 ha. This population has been breeding well, achieving an average annual population growth rate of 9.7%. Furthermore, due to highly effective anti-poaching measures, the operation has lost less than 0.02% of its rhinoceroses to poaching in the 10 years since its inception, which is significantly less than the national average. If sound management of this population continues and genetic heterozygosity is maintained at a high level, wild populations could be augmented with these captive bred rhinoceroses sometime in the future if needed. It is within this context that criteria for the captive breeding of white rhinoceros (*Ceratotherium simum simum*) have been developed (SANBI, 2018) and approved by South Africa's CITES Scientific Authority for implementation in South Africa.

| | | |
|---|------------------------------|----------|
| 7. National population trend: What is the recent national population trend? | Increasing | 1 |
| | Stable | 2 |
| | Reduced, but stable | 3 |
| | Reduced and still decreasing | 4 |
| | Uncertain | 5 |

The white rhinoceros is the most numerous of the African rhinoceros species, and ranged from Morocco to South Africa during the Pleistocene (Skinner & Chimimba, 2005). The northern white rhinoceros is now effectively extinct and South Africa is the main stronghold for the southern white rhinoceros, which has grown from a single remnant population of probably less than 50 animals at the turn of the 20th century, in what is now the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park, to over 17,000 individuals in the country.

White rhinoceros numbers in Africa increased rapidly from 1992 to 2010 (averaging 7.1% growth per year) followed by a levelling off that coincided with escalating poaching levels (Emslie, *et al.*, 2016). From 2012 to 2015, white rhinoceros numbers on the continent seemed to decline at a non-significant rate of 0.4% per year (Emslie & Adcock, 2016). In South Africa, white rhinoceros numbers increased threefold from over 5,000 individuals in 1992 to an estimated 18,910 animals in 2012 (Fig. 4). According to analyses undertaken by the AfRSG, the national average annual growth rate of the white rhinoceros population from 1991 to 2012 was 7.1% (with poaching related mortalities accounted for).

A 2015 publication by the AfRSG estimated the total South African wild white rhinoceros population at 17,208 individuals (16,549 – 17,863), indicating a levelling off or possibly a slight decline in the national population (Fig. 4). Emslie and Adcock (2016) predicted that the average estimated number of white rhinoceros in 2020 across three poaching scenarios modelled, will either increase by 1.9% or decrease by 3.9% (Table 2; for details on modelling see Emslie & Adcock, 2016).

Table 2: Average results of modelling white rhinoceros numbers in South Africa and Swaziland using only best estimate of long-term underlying growth rate (7.7% per annum) and averaging models based on both arithmetic and exponential changes in poaching levels over different time periods and using averages across all three time periods modelled assuming different detection rates of carcasses in the KNP (Emslie & Adcock, 2016).

| | 100% detection rate in KNP | 80% detection rate in KNP |
|---|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Starting number (end 2015) | 18,489 | 18,489 |
| End 2020 based on last 5 years' TTM* poaching trend | 16,277 | 14,775 |
| End 2020 based on last 3 years' TTM poaching trend | 17,485 | 16,124 |
| End 2020 based on last year's TTM poaching trend | 22,776 | 22,102 |

| | | |
|---|--------|--------|
| End 2020 based on averaging results with poaching modelled over last 5,3 and 1 year TTM periods (best estimates used in assessment) | 18,846 | 17,767 |
|---|--------|--------|

*TTM Trailing 12 month period from May of the 1st year to April of the following year.

A number of key developments are thought to have contributed to the increase in the national population of white rhinoceros since the late 1800s. These include (1) the improved ability to capture and translocate white rhinoceros following the first successful translocation of white rhinoceros from iMfolozi Game Reserve in 1961; (2) the improvements in the use of anaesthetic and other drugs to calm rhinoceros during capture; (3) the attribution of (financial) value to white rhinoceros associated with the first sport hunting of the species in 1968; (4) the mass translocation of over 500 white rhinoceros from Hluhluwe and Umfolozi Game Reserves to the KNP in the early 1980s to avoid drought related mortalities; (5) implementation of a policy by the then Natal Parks Board allowing white rhinoceros to be auctioned off and thus establishing a market related value for the species which resulted in an increasing number of white rhinoceros being afforded protection on private land from the late 1980s onwards; and (6) a CITES annotated Appendix II listing in 1995 that allowed for the international trade in live animals in addition to the exports of hunting trophies.

In KwaZulu-Natal, the provincial subpopulation grew at an average rate of 3.9% per annum from 2004 and reached its peak in 2012 (3,543). From 2012 to present, the subpopulation of white rhinoceros has showed an annual decline of 5.8% per annum (Goodman, *et al.*, 2017).

Southern white rhinoceros occurring in the three small National Park subpopulations, in Mokala, Marakele and Mapungubwe, increased from 2011 to 2015 (Ferreira, *et al.*, 2017). In KNP confidence intervals of estimates from 2011 to 2015 overlapped, but point estimates suggest 1% increase to a potential 9% decline (Ferreira, *et al.*, 2017). Between the 2013 and 2014 surveys, the number of southern white rhinoceroses that were born and survived the first year (854 – 992 animals) in KNP exceeded the number that were poached (745 animals) (Ferreira, *et al.*, 2017). However, between the 2014 and 2015 surveys, the number of white rhinoceroses born and surviving the first year (725 – 810 individuals) were similar to that poached (818 individuals). As the white rhinoceros subpopulation in the KNP comprises around half (52%) of the national population, trends in the KNP subpopulation are likely to directly affect the national population trend (Ferreira, *et al.*, 2017).

| | | |
|---|----------------------------------|----------|
| 8. Quality of information: What type of information is available to describe abundance and trend in the national population? | Quantitative data, recent | 1 |
| | Good local knowledge | 2 |
| | Quantitative data, outdated | 3 |
| | Anecdotal information | 4 |
| | None | 5 |

Detailed data exist on white rhinoceros numbers, poaching and population performances for most subpopulations over the past 30 years due to a process of confidential annual white rhinoceros status reporting to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Rhinoceros Management Group (RMG), as well as regular reporting to IUCN/SSC AfRSG. The size of many white rhinoceros subpopulations, which are monitored using individual identification methods, are known exactly or to within a few individuals. In KNP, where individual based monitoring over the whole area is not feasible, white rhinoceros numbers are monitored using intensive helicopter block counts which have wider confidence levels (Ferreira *et al.*, 2017). In Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park, white rhinoceros numbers are estimated statistically using distance based line and point transects (Emslie & Adcock, 2016). In addition, a survey of all private reserves keeping white rhinoceros was completed in 2015 and another is planned for 2018. Although the quality of the reporting has varied over time and between the provinces and the private sector, there has been an overall improvement in reporting from both sectors in the past years. Recently the quality of monitoring in some populations has declined as field staff are having to increasingly focus on anti-poaching with less time available for other conservation activities such as monitoring.

| | | |
|---|---------------------|----------|
| 9. Major threats: What major threat is the species facing (underline following: <u>overuse</u> / habitat loss and alteration/ invasive species/ other:) and how severe is it? | None | 1 |
| | Limited/Reversible | 2 |
| | Substantial | 3 |
| | Severe/Irreversible | 4 |
| | Uncertain | 5 |

The current major threat to South Africa's white rhinoceros population is the continuing loss of individuals to poaching for their horn (Knight, 2017). Since 2007 there has been an upsurge in black market prices for horn and apparent new uses and demand from south-east Asia and especially Vietnam, which has caused an increase in poaching in some range states including South Africa (Thomas, 2010; MacMillan *et al.*, 2017). Compounding this is the threat posed by organized crime. In 2016 approximately 1,009 wild white rhinoceros (approximately 6% of the national population) were lost to poaching with close to half of these in KNP alone. However, poaching has not yet exceeded the intrinsic rate of increase of the species nationally.

The rate of wild rhinoceros poaching increased rapidly since 2007 and then levelled off and started to decline since 2014. The rate of wild white rhinoceros poaching was 0.04 rhinoceroses per day in 2007, increasing to 0.21 per day in 2008, 0.31 in 2009, 0.88 in 2010, 1.13 in 2011, 1.76 in 2012, 2.64 in 2013, to a peak of 3.15 rhinos per day in 2014 before declining to 3.01 in 2015 and 2.76 per day in 2016. A breakdown by species has not yet been released for 2017 but overall recorded rhinoceros poaching (all species; wild and semi-wild) was down by 2.5% from 2016 to 2017. This is likely to indicate a positive response to the anti-poaching interventions employed nationally and specifically in KNP. However, the number of incursions into KNP continue to increase year on year, only declining slightly in 2017. The growth in levels of sophistication of the methods employed by poachers is also a concern. This means that if the current effort to curb poaching is removed, poaching of white rhinoceros in KNP is likely to increase dramatically. In order to continue the current effort, huge financial input from external sources is crucial. The poaching threat is thus currently considered substantial, though reversible, and should the current funding and resources be removed, the severity of the threat will increase substantially. It is important to recognize though that the response to this threat has been disproportionately high, redirecting much needed conservation funding from other species.

Due to rising security costs, private rhinoceros owners are showing an increasing tendency to disinvest in the species, and as a result limited new suitable habitat is becoming available for the establishment of new rhinoceros subpopulations (Rubino & Pienaar, 2017). This not only impacts on range expansion, but also on the strategy of growing rhinoceros numbers as many current subpopulations are near or exceed ecological carrying capacity and thus have a very low growth rate (Balfour, *et al.*, 2015). Auctioning patterns indicate that there may be a decline in interest in keeping rhinoceros on private land, particularly in the provinces of Limpopo and Mpumalanga. In KwaZulu-Natal, both the number of protected areas with white rhinoceros and the number of private and communal game farms and reserves with rhinoceros declined between 2011 and 2015, but has remained constant since then. Poaching of white rhinoceros on private game farms and reserves has increased by more than 45% in the last year from approximately 160 animals in 2016 to 232 animals in 2017. Considering that approximately 28% of the national herd (4,735 animals) is kept on approximately 18,000 km² of privately owned land (Emslie, *et al.*, 2016), the loss of private sector interest in keeping white rhinoceros is a significant concern for the conservation of the species. In some cases, reserve owners have moved their white rhinoceroses to separate enclosures for security purposes.

Income of the three largest white rhinoceros sellers (SANParks, Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife and Vleissentraal auctioneers) earned from the sale of white rhinoceros has reduced from a total of approximately R100 million in 2009 when 370 rhinoceros were sold, to R20 million in 2014 when only 60 were sold. Between 2009 and 2012 there was a 43% year on year reduction in rhinoceros sales from these sources, with a reduction in the average price from R365 000 per white rhinoceros in 2009 to R258 000 in 2012. This equated to a direct loss to these institutions during this period of approximately R100 million. With the total number of rhinoceros being sold declining from the peak of 370 in 2009 to 60 in 2014, a further loss of revenue of about R273 million is estimated, bringing the total loss to R373 million. Turnover from the 1,750 white rhinoceros sold by SANParks, Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife and Vleissentraal auctioneers over the 2008 – 2014 period totalled R500 million, averaging R63 million per year. Interestingly, in 2012 suggestions that South Africa would consider submitting a proposal to the 17th Conference of the Parties (CoP) to CITES to trade in rhinoceros horn saw the average price for a white rhinoceros increase temporarily back to R305 000 per animal. For security reasons an increasing proportion of rhinoceros are not being sold publicly on auctions. A further constraint for the conservation of the species is the current veterinary moratorium on the translocation of rhinoceros from KNP for the establishment of new subpopulations on the basis that rhinoceroses are potential carriers of tuberculosis.

The loss of revenue and value of rhinoceros to both state and private sector owners generated from the sale of rhinoceros translates into reduced funds for new conservation land and anti-poaching measures. Active involvement of the private sector in the acquisition of rhinoceros since 2005 was estimated to generate R290 million for conservation authorities. A further consequence of the decline in the sale and subsequent introduction of rhinoceros to new areas is the expected decline in the meta-population growth rate. Increased poaching also means there will be fewer surplus rhinoceros that could be sold to maintain productive densities.

Habitat loss is not a threat to the white rhinoceros and the species' range has in fact expanded since the 1960s.

| Harvest management | | |
|---|---------------|----------|
| 10. Illegal off-take or trade: How significant is the national problem of illegal or unmanaged off-take or trade? | None | 1 |
| | Small | 2 |
| | Medium | 3 |
| | Large | 4 |
| | Uncertain | 5 |

Poaching on a continental level in 2015 represented 5.0% of African rhinoceros numbers (5.3% for white rhinoceros). Poaching levels are now approaching the continental average annual growth rates (7.2%) that white rhinoceros achieved between 1995 and 2007. In South Africa, an estimated 6.4% of the national population was lost to poachers in 2015 (Table 3). As a result, the white rhinoceros was listed as Near Threatened (A4ad) on the IUCN regional (South Africa, Swaziland and Lesotho) Red List of Threatened Species (Emslie & Adcock, 2016).

Table 3: Estimated white rhinoceros poaching in South Africa over the last seven years.

| Year | Wild population estimate | No. of wild rhinoceros poached | Poaching as % of wild population |
|--------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 2010 | 18,462 | 321 | 1.7% |
| 2011 | | 414 | |
| 2012 | 18,358 | 643 | 3.5% |
| 2013 | | 962 | |
| 2014 | | 1,151 | |
| 2015 | 17,208 | 1,097 | 6.4% |
| 2016 | | 1,009 | 6.0% |
| Total | 17,208 | 4,597 | |

Six percent less net growth in white rhinoceros numbers over a period of 10 years equates to approximately 17,670 fewer white rhinos; animals that could be sold to generate conservation revenue and/or translocated to increase the meta-population and expand the species' range (assuming that there is sufficient land to accommodate these additional animals) (figures based on a starting population size of 18,800 and an intrinsic rate of increase of 8%). This effectively represents a R6 billion loss in asset value for the country and will impact significantly on the generation of revenue for conservation and the expansion of the white rhinoceros range.

A total of 1,009 wild white rhino were poached in 2016, compared to 1,097 in 2015 and 1,151 in 2014, representing declines in poaching rates of 4.7% and 8.0%. Total national rhinoceros poaching (both species and including intensively managed white rhinoceros) also declined by 26 animals or 3.0% from 2016 to 2017. These limited reductions in poaching after a period of significant increases in poaching indicate a positive response to the anti-poaching interventions employed nationally and specifically in KNP. The situation on the ground is however more complex because while the number of rhinoceros poached in KNP has decreased, there is evidence that poaching has increased in other hotspots, particularly in northern KwaZulu-Natal. Overall losses from the KwaZulu-Natal white rhinoceros population from poaching, trophy hunting and live exports from the province have risen from 2% per annum between 2005 and 2009 to 4% per annum between 2010 and 2012. Between 2012 and 2016 the proportion removed varied between 5.1% and 7.6%, but in 2017 rose to an all-time high of 10% (Fig. 5). These losses are primarily due to poaching and live exports from the province. The primary pressure on, and future threat to the KwaZulu-Natal white rhinoceros population is that of poaching. Poaching was generally low prior to 2008, but this situation has changed radically in the last six years indicating an exponential increase in poaching mortality. In 2017, the poaching rate was the highest on record amounting to 7.75% of the population. This was well above 2013 and 2014 levels (Fig. 5) and more than three times the maximum acceptable rate of 2% per annum.

The legal hunting of trophies for the purpose of obtaining rhinoceros horn ("pseudo hunts") was widespread in South Africa until 2012 when it was substantially reduced through legislative intervention. Stricter scrutiny under the new policy has resulted in the refusal of at least 17 hunting applications from the Czech Republic, Ukraine, Vietnam, China, Bulgaria, Canada and Slovakia, and at least 24 other hunts were cancelled (Emslie, *et al.*, 2016). This may have led to increased poaching as the supply of rhinoceros horn shifted from that obtained in pseudo hunts to that obtained from poached animals (Table 3; Fig. 5). It is important to note that while pseudo hunting removed surplus male rhinoceroses, poaching removes individuals of all sexes and ages, thereby impacting the breeding potential of the population. In addition, some private sector rhinoceros owners have reportedly sold horns into the illegal market (Hübschle, 2015).

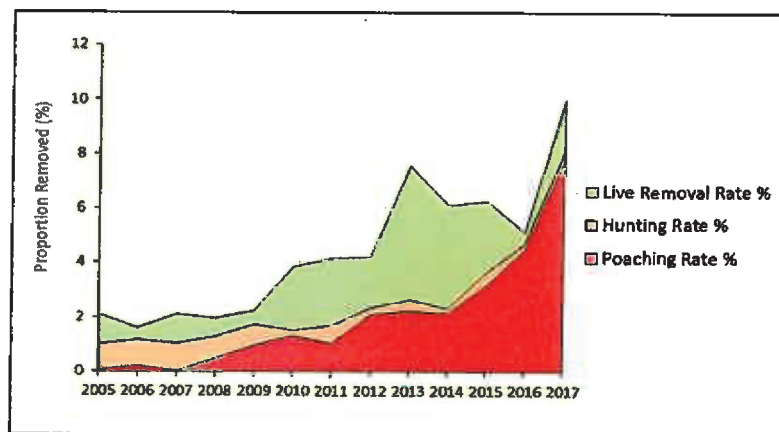


Figure 5: Removal rate (percentage) of white rhinoceros for harvesting activities such as live removals, hunting and poaching respectively in KwaZulu-Natal between 2005 and 2017.

11. Management history: What is the history of harvest?

Managed harvest: ongoing with adaptive framework

1

Managed harvest: ongoing but informal

2

Managed harvest: new

3

Unmanaged harvest: ongoing or new

4

Uncertain

5

A high proportion (72%) of the white rhinoceros population is generally well managed within protected areas, with offtakes managed in terms of ecological management plans. The white rhinoceros subpopulation in the KNP (52% of the national population) is managed in accordance with an adaptive management plan. Management of white rhinoceros on private land is undertaken for different purposes and is thus more variable. In KwaZulu-Natal, a management strategy and a status reporting framework currently supports fixed stocking rate management and therefore constant harvest management for some of the subpopulations in the province.

Legal hunting is regulated through a system of permits, mostly on private land and is generally economically motivated. Legal hunting of white rhinoceros commenced in South Africa when the size of the national population was approximately 1,800. Prior to 2005, the number of white rhinoceros hunted annually was generally a function of market forces, with 36 – 70 hunts being permitted. After 2005 the number of rhinoceros hunted annually increased. With an increase in hunts being undertaken by non-traditional hunters ("pseudo hunters"), hunting peaked at 173 in 2011. However, following the introduction of a number of measures to combat pseudo hunting in early 2012, the number of white rhinoceros hunted have dropped down to previous levels, and 64 were hunted in 2015. Greater regulation of the hunting process has resulted in a rapid decline in the number of applications by hunters from non-traditional hunting countries. Despite the translocation of significant numbers of white rhinoceros out of the country to stock protected areas in other African countries, zoos and safari parks

worldwide, the white rhinoceros population in South Africa is approximately 10 times larger since trophy hunting was introduced in 1968; a clear demonstration that this approach is sustainable and provides a positive contribution to conservation (Emslie, *et al.*, 2016; Cooney, *et al.*, 2017) (Fig. 6).

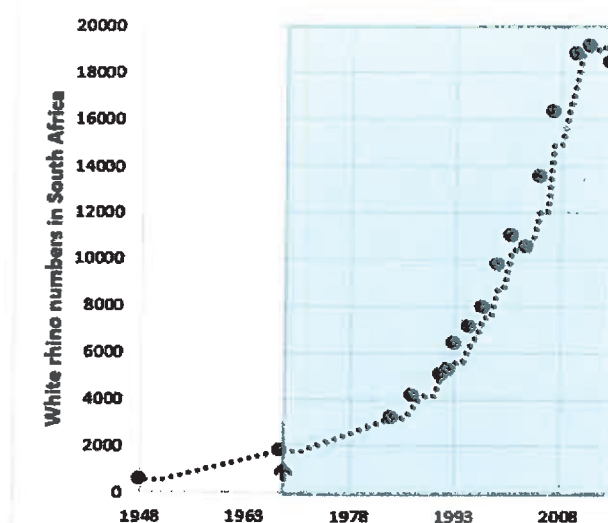


Figure 6: Growth of the white rhinoceros population in South Africa before and after trophy hunting started (↑) in 1968 (Emslie, *et al.*, 2016).

In 1976 the CITES Conference of the Parties (CoP) included the entire Rhinocerotidae family in Appendix I. In 1994 the CoP transferred South Africa's population of southern white rhinoceros (*Ceratotherium simum simum*) to Appendix II with an annotation to allow for the international trade in live animals to appropriate and acceptable destinations and the export of hunting trophies. The South African black rhinoceros population remained on Appendix I. There has thus been an international ban on the commercial trade in rhinoceros horn since 1976.

In addition a moratorium on the sale of rhinoceros horn or rhinoceros horn products within the country was implemented on 13 February 2009 (Government Gazette No. 31899, Notice No. 148). The moratorium was a temporary measure to afford the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) an opportunity to develop and implement permanent measures aimed at eliminating the illegal international trade in rhinoceros horns. The moratorium was set aside by the High Court of South Africa (Gauteng Division) on 29 November 2015 on the basis that an appropriate public consultation process, as required in terms of section 100 of the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (NEMBA) No. 10 of 2004, had not been followed. The High Court judgment was upheld when the Supreme Court of Appeal and the Constitutional Court did not grant leave for appeal. The implication of the judgment is that the domestic trade in rhinoceros horn within the borders of the country is once again legal, and government is now obliged to consider any permit application received in this regard. To effectively manage the legal domestic trade in rhinoceros horn, the DEA published draft regulatory measures for the domestic trade in rhinoceros horn, or a part, product or derivative of rhinoceros horn for public comment, in February 2017 (Gazette No. 40601). These measures will be implemented only once the regulations are finalised.

In 2017, the CITES Scientific Authority of South Africa, considering CITES Resolution Conf. 11.2 (Rev CoP) on the definition of appropriate and acceptable destinations, made the following recommendations with regards to the export of white rhinoceros from South Africa (SA 2017-03):

1. A maximum of five rhinoceroses (either one male and between two and four females, or five males) may be exported for zoological purposes as the education and awareness associated with zoos and exhibition facilities can promote *in situ* conservation, and the sale of rhinoceroses

to zoos further generates funds essential for habitat management and for securing rhinoceros populations against poaching (SA 2017-03).

2. Unless as part of a formal *ex-situ* programme that (a) is supported by the authorities in both the import and export State and that (b) forms part of a conservation strategy or BMP (Biodiversity Management Plan), export of any number of rhinoceroses for breeding purposes to outside the species' natural distribution range should not be allowed as these exports cannot be deemed to promote the *in situ* conservation of the species.

As an indication of government's commitment to combat poaching at the highest level, South Africa's Cabinet adopted an integrated four-pronged approach to stop poaching (Department of Environmental Affairs 2014). The four elements of this approach are: (1) compulsory interventions to protect rhinoceros by implementing widespread and intensive anti-poaching programmes as well as creating particular zones of management using technology and intelligence, (2) game-changing interventions, targeted simultaneously at disrupting organised crime and creating opportunities for more equitable benefit-sharing of ecosystem services with all South Africans, (3) long-term sustainability interventions to explore the development of a legal and sustainable rhinoceros trade system and (4) biological management interventions that focus on strategic removals from areas of high poaching risk to create rhinoceros strongholds elsewhere (Ferreira, *et al.*, 2017).

Since 2010, the South African government has launched a variety of initiatives in collaboration with various stakeholders to address the poaching threat to rhinoceros and ensure the long term conservation of the species (Fig. 7). The Rhinoceros Conservation Lab in 2016 identified challenges and developed detailed action plans and budgets to implement the Committee of Inquiry recommendations. The total budget required to implement the Lab's initiatives is approximately R473 million per year (R379 million for the South African Police initiatives and R94 million for all others). In 2017, a process to develop a rhinoceros research strategy was initiated.

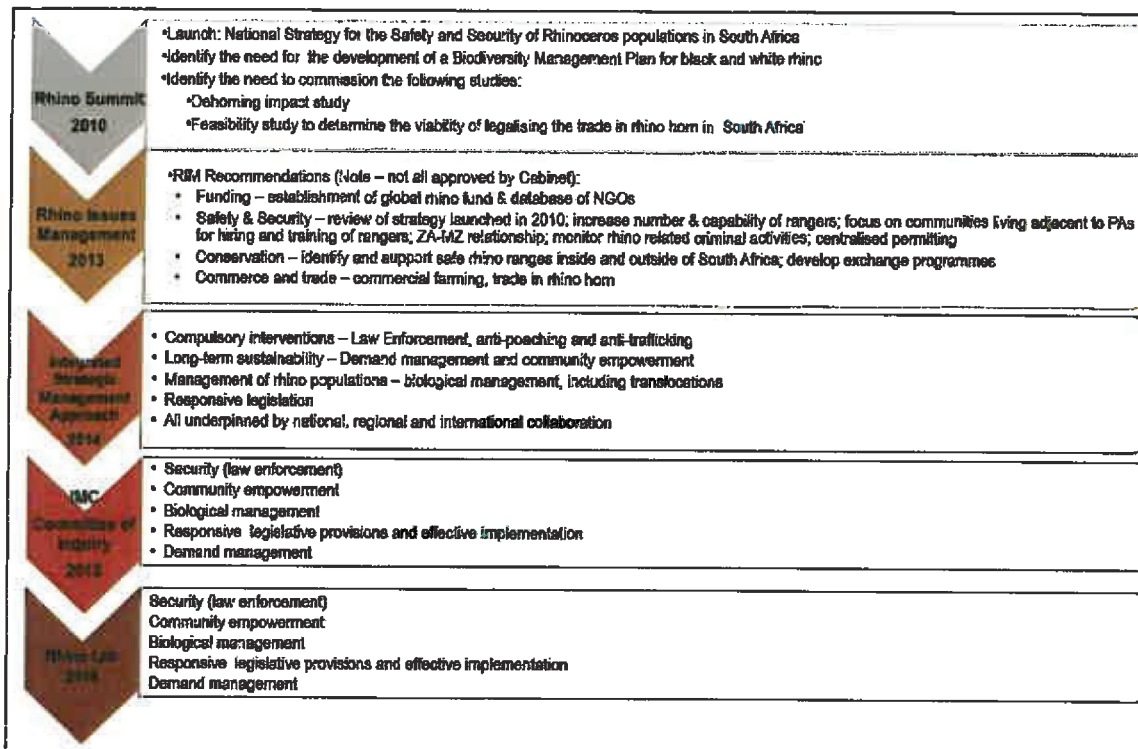


Figure 7: A flow diagram illustrating the timelines and main outcomes of initiatives taken by the South African government in collaboration with various stakeholders to address the poaching threat to rhinoceros and ensure the long term conservation of the species (Source: presentation by T. Carroll (DEA), October 2017).

In March 2018, the Private Rhino Owners Association (PROA) launched Rhino Horn Trade Africa (RHTA), an initiative that will facilitate the legal trade of rhinoceros horn via an online trade desk, which aims to provide a managed, efficient platform from which genuine buyers and sellers can trade in legal, humanely acquired rhinoceros horn.

| | | |
|---|--|----------|
| 12. Management plan or equivalent: Is there a management plan related to the harvest of the species? | Approved and co-ordinated local and national management plans | 1 |
| | Approved national/state/provincial management plan(s) | 2 |
| | Approved local management plan | 3 |
| | No approved plan: informal unplanned management | 4 |
| | Uncertain | 5 |

A national white rhinoceros strategy was approved in 2000 and in December 2015 a national Biodiversity Management Plan (BMP) for white rhinoceros was gazetted for implementation (Government Gazette No. 39469) in terms of section 43 of the NEMBA. This plan, which was developed by the SADC RMG, is informed by the National Strategy for the Safety and Security of Rhino Populations in South Africa (DEA 2011) as well as the Rhinoceros Issues Management Report (DEA 2013) and will form the basis for greater coordination between existing and future plans. The primary objective of the plan is a national white rhinoceros net average population growth rate of 2% per annum, with at least 20,400 southern white rhinoceros in South Africa by the end of 2020. The BMP advocates the use of set percentage harvesting to retain populations at productive densities.

SANParks has an institutional plan for white rhinoceros (last updated in 2014) and Ezemvelo KZN-Wildlife implements a provincial level management strategy for white rhinoceros on state, private and communal land.

A SADC Regional Rhinoceros Conservation Strategy for white rhinoceros (as well as black rhinoceros) was adopted in 2005. The strategy sets out a long-term goal of maintaining "Southern African rhinoceros [...] as flagship species for biodiversity conservation and wildlife-based economic development, within viable and well distributed populations" (Janssens & Trouwborst 2018). In addition to this, the 2016 African rhino Range States' conservation plan was developed and endorsed by almost all African rhinoceros range states including South Africa.

| | | |
|---|---|----------|
| 13. Aim of harvest regime in management planning: What is harvest aiming to achieve? | Generate conservation benefit | 1 |
| | Population management/control | 2 |
| | Maximize economic yield | 3 |
| | Opportunistic, unselective harvest, or none | 4 |
| | Uncertain | 5 |

The white rhinoceros subpopulations in South Africa are potentially subjected to a number of types of legal offtake. These include management removal for ecological or biodiversity reasons as well as offtakes for trophy hunting and revenue generation on live sales. The majority of these offtakes (excluding international exports of live animals and trophy hunts) do not result in the permanent removal of animals from the national population. These offtakes generate a conservation benefit through enabling effective conservation management (including rapid growth in numbers and expansion of the species' range), while at the same time generating conservation revenue. Since 1986 more than 3,000 white rhinoceros have been sold by the state to the private sector. More recently, removals of white rhinoceros from KNP have been undertaken to translocate animals to safer habitats. However, this is now prevented by a veterinary moratorium on the translocation of white rhinoceros from KNP due to current concerns that white rhinoceros may be carriers of tuberculosis.

A total of 774 live white rhinoceros (source codes W, R, and F) were exported from South Africa between 2005 and 2016, constituting approximately 22% of the total exports of this species from South Africa during this time period (CITES Trade Database, UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre, Cambridge, UK). Live animals were exported primarily for re-introduction purposes (33%), to zoos (27% of exports) and breeding facilities (26% of exports). The main destination countries were Namibia (38% of exports), China (32% of exports), and Botswana (7% of exports), with Namibia and Botswana importing live white rhinoceros mainly for re-introduction purposes, and China mainly for zoos and breeding facilities. Between 2010 and 2016, 535 live white rhinoceros were exported from South Africa. The main destinations were Namibia (>200) (range State), China (135), Botswana (39) (range State), Spain (24) and Vietnam (17).

Permanent removal of white rhinoceros from the national population through legal hunting is predominantly economically motivated, although it does provide additional conservation benefits (demographic, genetic and security). Legal hunting removed about 0.59% of the national population during the period 2005 – 2015 and 0.43% since 2012 when measures to prevent pseudo hunting were implemented. It is a national policy that sustainable hunting aims to generate a conservation benefit through incentivizing the private sector to keep rhinoceros and to purchase land in order to stock rhinoceros. Trophy hunting removes surplus adult males, whilst generating important revenue for private and state conservation, this in contrast to poaching which removes a wider range of ages and sexes. Thus poaching is likely to have a greater impact on rhinoceros population growth rates. It has been demonstrated that trophy hunting can be sustainably managed in South Africa (see Figs 6 & 8) (Cooney *et al.*, 2017; Emslie, *et al.*, 2016). Seventy-seven percent of the total exports of white rhinoceros specimens between 2005 and 2015 were hunting trophies (CITES Trade Database, UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre, Cambridge, UK); 1,115 trophies in total (although this figure is likely to be an overestimate due to the intricacies of data capture). Since South Africa clamped down on pseudo hunting in 2012, on average only 70 white rhinoceros were legally hunted annually (0.43% of the national population) (Fig. 8). The main destination countries for trophy hunting between 2013 and 2015 included the United States of America (40%), China (10%), Poland (8%) and the Russian Federation (8%). Even in the year of peak pseudo hunting (2011), only 0.94% of the population was hunted (Fig. 8) (Emslie, *et al.*, 2016).

Regulated legal hunting in KwaZulu-Natal is also minimal. Data available for the period 2005 to 2017 indicate an average harvest rate of 18 white rhinoceros per annum, with 2010 and 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2016 falling well below this figure. This harvest has declined since its peak in 2007 and is easily sustained by the current population. In 2016, the number hunted was equivalent to 0.35% of the population which again is easily sustainable, especially given that the revenue generated from trophy hunting is put back into rhinoceros protection and habitat management.

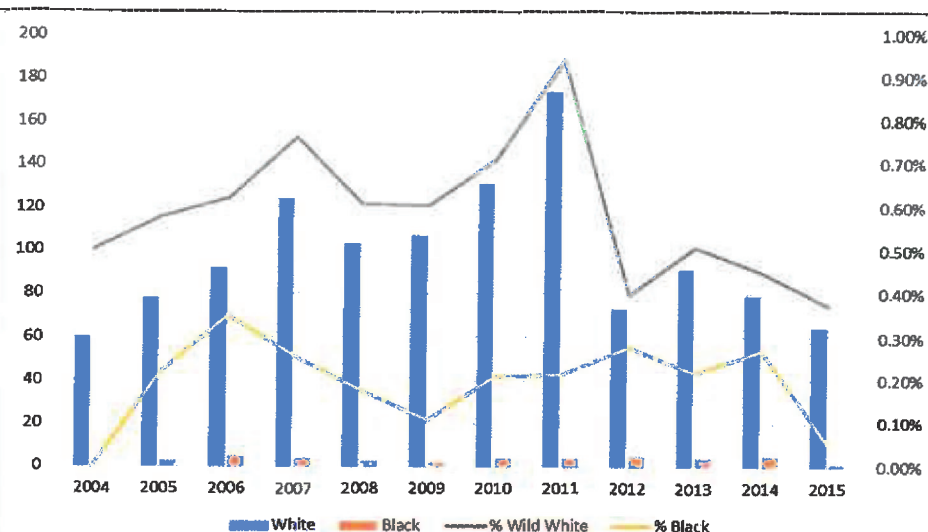


Figure 8: Number of white and black rhinoceros hunted and the percentage of the estimated wild rhinoceros population hunted (Source: IUCN SSC AfRSG).

14. Quotas: Is the harvest based on a system of quotas?

| | |
|--|----------|
| Ongoing national quota: based on biologically derived local quotas | 1 |
| Ongoing quotas: "cautious" national or local | 2 |
| Untried quota: recent and based on biologically derived local quotas | 3 |
| Market-driven quota(s), arbitrary quota(s), or no quotas | 4 |
| Uncertain | 5 |

The number of white rhinoceros legally hunted annually is market driven but well below a level that would threaten the long-term viability of the national herd. For this reason, setting a quota has been unnecessary to date and the white rhinoceros BMP stipulates that the implementation of a hunting quota will be reviewed if trophy hunting increases to above 1% of the national population. Since 2012, on average 70 white rhinoceros are legally hunted annually (0.43% of the national population). There is currently no quota for the export of rhinoceros horn for non-commercial purposes and no national quota for the export of live white rhinoceros.

Control of harvest

15. Harvesting in Protected Areas:

What percentage of the legal national harvest occurs in State-controlled Protected Areas?

| | |
|------------|----------|
| High | 1 |
| Medium | 2 |
| Low | 3 |
| None | 4 |
| Uncertain | 5 |

Less than 2% of the national herd is translocated from state protected areas annually. The removal of live animals for local translocation purposes is not considered to be a form of harvest in terms of this NDF as these animals are not permanently removed from the national population. Individuals that are removed (translocated) from established subpopulations that are approaching or exceed carrying capacity are routinely being invested in new areas with suitable habitat and protection, where populations can grow rapidly. Biological management has played a significant role in the expansion of range and numbers of white rhinoceros. Since 2012, on average 70 white rhinoceros are legally hunted annually (0.43% of the national population). Of these less than 10 are hunted from state controlled protected areas.

High

1

| | | |
|--|--------------------------------|---|
| 16. Harvesting in areas with strong resource tenure or ownership: What percentage of the legal national harvest occurs outside Protected Areas, in areas with strong local control over resource use? | Medium | 2 |
| | Low | 3 |
| | None | 4 |
| | Uncertain | 5 |
| On average about 70 white rhinoceros are legally hunted annually outside of state protected areas. Most of these animals are hunted on private land, where there is strong local control over resource use. | | |
| 17. Harvesting in areas with open access: What percentage of the legal national harvest occurs in areas where there is no strong local control, giving <i>de facto</i> or actual open access? | None | 1 |
| | Low | 2 |
| | Medium | 3 |
| | High | 4 |
| | Uncertain | 5 |
| White rhinoceros occur solely in protected areas and on game farms and reserves. | | |
| 18. Confidence in harvest management: Do budgetary and other factors allow effective implementation of management plan(s) and harvest controls? | High confidence | 1 |
| | Medium confidence | 2 |
| | Low confidence | 3 |
| | No confidence | 4 |
| | Uncertain | 5 |
| Since the introduction of the amended Norms and Standards for the Marking of Rhinoceros and Rhinoceros Horn and for the Hunting of Rhinoceros for Trophy Hunting Purposes (Government Gazette No. 35248; April 2012), trophy hunts are attended by conservation officials, a legal requirement of the norms and standards. Through better regulation, the occurrence of "pseudo hunts" has ceased. | | |
| While previously problems with reporting and monitoring were experienced, policing, record keeping and the implementation of regulations have much improved. A suite of decision-making mechanisms and a robust permitting system are currently in place to manage and monitor harvest of white rhinoceros. | | |
| Monitoring of harvest | | |
| 19. Methods used to monitor the harvest: What is the principal method used to monitor the effects of the harvest? | Direct population estimates | 1 |
| | Quantitative indices | 2 |
| | Qualitative indices | 3 |
| | National monitoring of exports | 4 |
| | No monitoring or uncertain | 5 |
| The monitoring method employed in the KNP is primarily one of conducting block counts. Formal distance sampling using line and point transects is employed in the Hluhluwe iMfolozi Park in KwaZulu-Natal. The quality of monitoring of the remainder of the national herd is variable, with rhinoceroses closely monitored at many sites. Many larger subpopulations are monitored through aerial counts, while smaller subpopulations are monitored using ranger sightings of ear notched individuals. Due to security concerns, there is however mistrust among parties and access to information is a challenge. | | |
| The amended Norms and Standards for the Marking of Rhinoceros and Rhinoceros Horn and for the Hunting of Rhinoceros for Trophy Hunting Purposes (Government Gazette No. 35248; April 2012) require that all hunts are monitored by conservation officials. In addition, all dehorning activities are monitored by conservation officials. The main purpose of dehorning at present is to reduce the incentive to poach rhinoceros. In small subpopulations dehorning is cost effective, and all rhinoceros have | | |

therefore been dehorned in many of the smaller subpopulations. However, dehorning is less common in larger subpopulations. The norms and standards require that a DNA sample be collected at the time of dehorning for genetic profiling purposes, as well as from each live animal and from both horns of the live animal in cases where the animals are sold and translocated. DNA samples of all detached horns must also be collected. A possession permit as well as a DNA certificate is issued to the owner of the rhinoceros horn and all DNA samples are stored on the RHODIS database to ensure traceability. The system is well managed and rhinoceros horn stock piles are regularly audited.

Reporting of rhinoceros horn stocks within the private sector continues to increase in part due to improved declaration and reporting. A 2014 survey of white rhinoceros owners in South Africa found that privately-held stocks totalled 1,697 pieces (6,256 kg) (Balfour *et al.*, 2015), accounting for approximately 80 – 85% of the potential estimated weight of stocks expected from natural mortalities (i.e. 7,690 kg). Fear of reporting stockpiles to authorities in some provinces where such information could be leaked to criminals is a factor in under-reporting (Emslie *et al.*, 2016).

| | | |
|---|------------------------|----------|
| 20. Confidence in harvest monitoring: Do budgetary and other factors allow effective harvest monitoring? | High confidence | 1 |
| | Medium confidence | 2 |
| | Low confidence | 3 |
| | No confidence | 4 |
| | Uncertain | 5 |

Monitoring of the rates of harvest (both illegal and legal) of white rhinoceros in state protected areas, which constitute 72% of the national herd, are conducted with a high level of confidence. KNP has an approximate 80% detection rate for white rhinoceros carcasses. For KZN there is a 10% confidence limit around the provincial population estimate and a 100% confidence in the monitoring of legal harvest. Rhinoceroses are individually known on smaller properties where there is also a high confidence in carcass detection rates. Even though there are some concerns with regards to adequate budgets to conduct regular counts and implement intensive monitoring on the ground, and though there has been a decline in the quality of monitoring information captured in recent years in some reserves due to the redeployment of rangers to anti-poaching activities, very good population estimates exist and in most cases direct population estimates are used to monitor the effects of harvest.

The amended Norms and Standards for the Marking of Rhinoceros and Rhinoceros Horn and for the Hunting of Rhinoceros for Trophy Hunting Purposes require that all rhinoceros hunts are attended by conservation officials. Provincial conservation agencies indicate that these legal requirements are being complied with in full.

Incentives and benefits from harvesting

| | | |
|--|-------------------|----------|
| 21. Utilization compared to other threats: What is the effect of the harvest when taken together with the major threat that has been identified for this species? | Beneficial | 1 |
| | Neutral | 2 |
| | Harmful | 3 |
| | Highly negative | 4 |
| | Uncertain | 5 |

Legal hunting of white rhinoceros has been beneficial to the conservation of the species. Due to the significant economic benefits of hunting to game farmers (worth approximately \$19 million over the period 2004 – 2008), together with live sales and ecotourism, the private sector has increasingly stocked these animals. This has contributed to the expansion of the species' range and has maintained a rapid population growth of the national population. However, the current prohibition on the commercial international trade in rhinoceros horn can be viewed as a missed opportunity for beneficiation associated with owning and protecting rhinoceros.

Live sales of surplus animals to the private sector have been highly beneficial to conservation agencies, generating vital conservation revenue (e.g. sales by SANParks, and Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife as well as

Vleissentraal from 2007 to end 2014 totalled R507 million) and preventing overstocking in established subpopulations. However, the increased poaching rate has limited this positive impact as private sector interest in buying and keeping rhinoceros has declined due to the rising costs of security. Due to the increased poaching losses there will be no legal offtakes from Hluhluwe iMfolozi Park this year (2018), which would otherwise have been sold on auction – this foregone revenue source is a loss to conservation.

22. Incentives for species

conservation: At the national level, how much conservation benefit to this species accrues from harvesting?

| | |
|---------------|----------|
| High | 1 |
| Medium | 2 |
| Low | 3 |
| None | 4 |
| Uncertain | 5 |

The ability of the state and the private sector to gain financially from owning, selling, translocating, viewing (via ecotourism) and hunting white rhinoceros has contributed significantly to the conservation of this species in South Africa through expansion of its range and the maintenance of a rapid population growth. Recent research suggests that the photographic tourism revenues generated by Kruger National Park's rhinoceros population between 2011 and 2013 ranged from 5.9 to 14.9 million US\$ per year (Saayman & Saayman, 2017).

Privately owned game farms and reserves have contributed significantly to white rhinoceros conservation (Fig. 9), with 28% of the national herd (approximately 4,735 animals) kept on approximately 18,000 km² of privately-owned land. The private sector in South Africa now conserves more rhinoceros than there are black and white rhinoceros in the whole of the rest of Africa (Emslie & Adcock, 2016). However, increased poaching, increased security costs, increasing numbers of incidents deemed threatening to human life, and perceived reduced incentives for their conservation, have resulted in reduced white rhinoceros live sale prices (to a low of R255 000 per animal in 2011) and an increasing number of owners seeking to remove their rhinoceroses. (Interestingly, speculation that South Africa could submit a proposal to the 17th CoP to CITES to trade in rhinoceros horn saw the average price paid for white rhinoceros increase temporarily to R305 000 in 2013.) Since 2011, approximately 12 reserves within KZN removed all their rhinoceroses, though many of these reserves had only a few animals. This worrying trend threatens to reverse the expansion of range and has the potential to significantly reduce conservation budgets (due to declining live sales), and possibly negatively affect meta-population growth rates in future. Where there is a diverse conservation income (inclusive of ecotourism), there is still some benefit of keeping rhinoceroses, but the cost benefit of keeping them is vulnerable (benefits are becoming marginal).

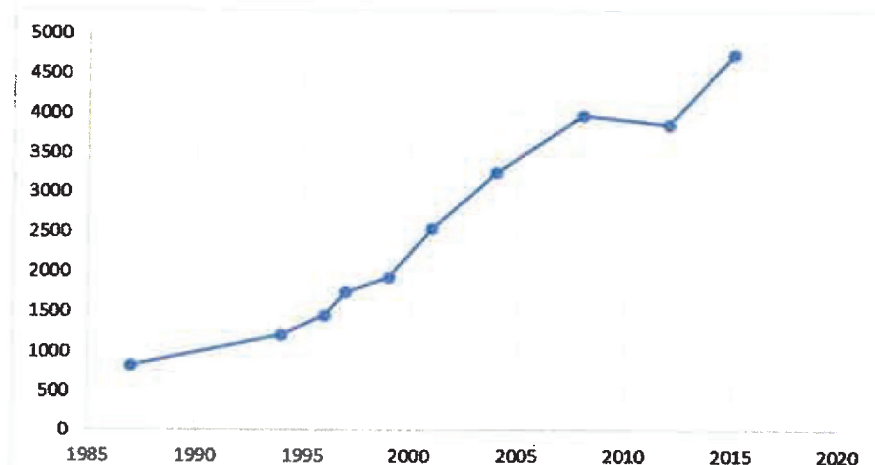


Figure 9: Numbers of white rhinoceros on private and community land from 1985 to 2015 (Source IUCN SSC AfRSG).

Poaching of rhinoceroses thus hampers several conservation objectives (Ferreira, Botha & Emmett, 2012). Population restoration opportunities as well revenue generating opportunities to enhance protected areas are lost when animals are poached. Importantly, rhinoceros horn profits are currently reaped largely by poachers and criminal traders on the black market, rather than by local communities or the public administrators or private owners of land hosting rhinoceroses who currently bear the prohibitive financial and security costs of protecting and conserving the species (Rubino & Pienaar, 2017).

It has been suggested that a legal trade in rhinoceros horn would attract buyers away from the illegal market and provide much needed additional income to bolster security by investing a percentage of the revenue obtained from trade back into conservation (Biggs *et al.*, 2013; Di Minin *et al.*, 2015). This would be especially pertinent for private owners of white rhinoceros, who would be able to recuperate some of their anti-poaching costs through the sale of horn. At present, some private owners are selling their rhinoceros due to the prohibitive financial and security pressures resulting from the poaching, while others are moving their animals to neighbouring countries (Emslie *et al.*, 2016; Knight, 2016; Rubino & Pienaar, 2017). A 2015 survey of 171 private rhinoceros owners conducted under the auspices of the SADC RMG and funded by the DEA, showed that 85% of the private rhinoceros owners supported legal international trade in horn, 10% were undecided and only 5% were against a legal trade in rhinoceros horn. The survey also showed that 80% of private rhinoceros owners would sell horn if it was legal to do so, while 44% would conduct intensive husbandry of rhinoceros in order to trade horn (Knight, 2016).

Based on recent white rhinoceros population estimates and feedback from private rhinoceros owners, Taylor, *et al.*, (2017) estimated the annual potential supply of horn that could be obtained within South Africa from four sources: natural mortalities, dehorning, trophy hunting and stockpiled horn. Using different scenarios of horn production they showed that the mass of horn that could be obtained varies from 5,319 to 13,356 kg per year (Taylor, *et al.*, 2017). The mass of horn currently lost to poachers per year is approximately 5,718 kg (3,781-5,933 kg for the period 2012-2016, assuming an average horn mass of 5.88kg per horn set) (Taylor, *et al.*, 2017).

| | | |
|--|------------|----------|
| 23. Incentives for habitat conservation: At the national level, how much habitat conservation benefit is derived from harvesting? | High | 1 |
| | Medium | 2 |
| | Low | 3 |
| | None | 4 |
| | Uncertain | 5 |

Private game farms and reserves contribute significantly to the conservation estate in South Africa. It is estimated that private game farms and reserves with white rhinoceros have added a further approximate 18,000 km² to the conservation footprint. However, due to the prohibitive financial and security pressures resulting from poaching, private landowners are disinvesting in rhinoceros and new suitable habitat is no longer becoming available to establish new rhinoceros populations. This does not only impact on range expansion, but also on current subpopulations that are near carrying capacity by reducing their population growth rates. The ecotourism incentive is still high, but incentives for the harvesting of white rhinoceros have likely decreased. At present benefits and revenue gained from harvesting are mostly financing the protection of rhinoceroses rather than habitat management and range expansion. Other factors reducing the benefit to habitat conservation include the veterinary moratorium on the translocation of rhinoceros from KNP, the cessation of live sales from Hluhluwe iMfolozi Park, a decline in the number of rhinoceroses sport hunted and higher security costs. There is however a potential for rhinoceros horn sales to increase incentives for the keeping of white rhinoceros and thus contribute to habitat conservation.

Protection from harvest

| | | |
|--|-------|---|
| 24. Proportion strictly protected: What percentage of the species' | >15% | 1 |
| | 5-15% | 2 |

| | | |
|--|-----------|---|
| natural range or population is legally excluded from harvest? | <5% | 3 |
| | None | 4 |
| | Uncertain | 5 |
| <p>In this NDF, strict protection is considered to be provided by state owned protected areas managed by provincial or national conservation agencies where legal hunting is negligible (<10 per year). Seventy-two percent of the national population is conserved within state protected areas (12,473 individuals). National parks, under the management of South African National Parks (SANParks), are custodian to more than 52% of South Africa's white rhinoceroses.</p> <p>The CITES prohibition on the international trade in rhinoceros horn for commercial purposes, in existence since 1977 and implemented in an attempt to reduce poaching and the illegal sales of rhinoceros products, is also considered to be a mechanism that affords strict protection to the species.</p> | | |

| | | |
|--|-----------------------|----------|
| 25. Effectiveness of strict protection measures: Do budgetary and other factors give confidence in the effectiveness of measures taken to afford strict protection? | High confidence | 1 |
| | Medium confidence | 2 |
| | Low confidence | 3 |
| | No confidence | 4 |
| | Uncertain | 5 |

There is a low confidence in the long-term effectiveness of the state protected area system to protect the white rhinoceros. Poaching has occurred in most state owned protected areas, and some protected areas are struggling to combat these illegal activities. For the KNP, this is primarily due to the long permeable border with Mozambique, and that country's inadequate legal and wildlife protection systems. More recently, removals of white rhinoceros from KNP to translocate animals to safer areas are prevented by a veterinary moratorium due to current concerns that white rhinoceros may be carriers of tuberculosis. Budgets and resources are also constrained and the strong emphasis on rhinoceros protection detracts from other important conservation issues as funding and resources are redeployed to rhinoceros protection and management.

The international ban on the commercial trade in rhinoceros horn, in place now for more than 40 years (Emslie, 2012), has also failed to effectively provide strict protection to the species, despite the numerous anti-poaching measures implemented in South Africa (Emslie, 2013; Emslie *et al.*, 2013; Knight, 2016; Rademeyer, 2016). It does appear from the latest poaching figures that the number of rhinoceroses poached per annum is on the decline, though while the number of rhinoceroses poached in KNP has decreased, there is evidence that poaching has increased in other hotspots, particularly in northern KwaZulu-Natal. Poaching from a national perspective has not yet resulted in a significant population decline of the white rhinoceros, as the number of births recorded per year still exceeds the number of deaths recorded. However, a number of key subpopulations are beginning to show signs of decline, which means that despite the significant resources that have been deployed towards gaining control over illegal activities, current protection measures are insufficient in the long term. These measures importantly fail to address the cause of the escalating poaching levels (high demand for black market horn at high prices, i.e. the low supply to demand ratio, coupled with poverty and unemployment in rural communities). Local South African and Mozambican men are contracted by crime syndicates to poach rhinoceroses. These poachers usually receive 1000 to 9000 US\$ per kg of horn (whereas end users pay an estimated 65 000 US\$ per kg) (Hübschle, 2016). Ground-level poachers are generally poor, and they rarely have access to job opportunities that provide comparable earnings (Lunstrum, 2014); understandably there are always local people willing to poach (Rubino & Pienaar, 2017).

Most importantly, there is a concern that the current protection measures are financially unsustainable. Based on a recommended one ranger per 10 km² (at a cost of approximately R50,218 per km²) for protected areas <100,000 ha, and a recommended one ranger per 15 – 30 km² (at a cost of approximately R16 739 – R33 479 per km²) for protected areas >100,000 ha (Conway, pers. com.), it is estimated that between R0.87 billion and R1.29 billion per annum is required to secure rhinoceroses in the state owned protected area system. KNP currently spends approximately R3 million per annum primarily on rhinoceros protection. Between 2009 and 2017 private game farms and reserves have spent collectively approximately R2 billion on the management and specifically the protection of rhinoceroses. Furthermore, a large portion of the rhinoceros security and enforcement budgets in a number of provinces are funded by international donors and are thus at risk of donor fatigue. It is unlikely that the current investment in the protection of rhinoceroses from current sources (government and donors) can be sustained in the long term. It is thus important that alternative sources of revenue be explored to protect rhinoceroses. Di Minin, *et al.*, (2015) argue that there is a certain economic value that could be derived from rhinoceros horn that could be allocated to the protection of the species. At present, the majority of private reserves have to fund their own security measures (Rubino & Pienaar, 2017). Income derived from the sale of rhinoceros horn could assist both government and the private sector to continue funding the current investment in rhinoceros protection.

As a result of the continuing illegal trade in rhinoceros horn and the apparent failure of the CITES trade ban, there have been calls from some segments of the conservation community to reconsider current policies, including the 40-year ban on the international trade in rhinoceros products, and to establish a legal, well-regulated international market for trading rhinoceros horn (Biggs *et al.*, 2013; Conrad, 2012; Di Minin *et al.*, 2015; Ferreira, Pfab & Knight, 2014). Ayling (2013) further argues that "where the knowledge base is poor and existing strategies seemingly ineffectual, one can certainly argue under a precautionary approach that any action that could reduce poaching and quash the illegal trade ought to be tried." Janssens and Trouwborst (2018) agree and recommend that the CITES CoP seriously explore the merits of alternative regimes for rhinoceros horn trade, which involve more scope for legal trade than allowed under the presently applicable regime.

There are at least four concerns relating to the potential effects of legalisation (Fischer, 2004). In relation to potential 'destigmatization' of rhinoceros horn use in consumer markets, Moyle (2018) however argues that there is no strong empirical or theoretical evidence that stigmatizing demand would be at a sufficient scale that it can compensate for the lack of legal competition. MacMillan *et al.* (2017), after interviewing 1,000 animal traditional medicine (ATM) users in Vietnam concluded that there is no evidence of social 'stigma' from rhinoceros horn consumption, and that the introduction of a legal supply of rhinoceros horn has the potential to 'crowd out' rhinoceros horns sourced from poachers for two reasons, namely, consumers' strong preference for non-lethal harvesting, and an anticipated overall fall in price due to the loss of prestige and exclusivity of rhinoceros horn within a legal and regulated trade. The study also found that there is likely to be a small increase in the number of people who might consume more rhinoceros horn due to legalization, and thus recommended that sufficient supplies of legal stock be available to meet demand. In relation to the concern that illegally obtained rhinoceros horn will be laundered into the legal trade, Moyle (2018) argues that where sales are occurring largely outside the legal market (i.e. illegally), trade bans have limited effect. He further argues that trade bans only achieve the objective of reducing laundering to zero, at the cost of giving up all competition with illegal sellers and possibly increasing illegal sales to above acceptable levels. The size of the legal market thus involves a trade-off between laundering and competition. Two further concerns around the potential effects of legalisation relate to whether legalised trade competes with existing illegal markets or simply creates new parallel ones, and whether legalised trade leads to reduced enforcement against illegal traders.

Irrespective of whether trade is legalised or not, Haas and Ferreira (2016) further suggest that in order to maintain rhinoceros subpopulations, a transnational policing effort aimed at dismantling criminal networks involved in rhinoceros horn trafficking, coupled with increases in legal economic opportunities for people living adjacent to protected areas, is required. It is further argued that providing legal job opportunities for young men in rural communities would further improve the protection of rhinoceros and reduce the poaching risk (Haas & Ferreira, unpubl; Jewkes, *et al.*, 2012).

| | | |
|---|-----------------------|---|
| 26. Regulation of harvest effort: | Very effective | |
| How effective are any restrictions on harvesting (such as age or size, season or equipment) for preventing overuse? | Effective | 2 |
| | Ineffective | 3 |
| | None | 4 |
| | Uncertain | 5 |

White rhinoceroses are utilised for trophy hunting, photographic tourism and recreation in accordance with the sustainable use principle that is enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa and embedded in NEMBA. The species is listed as protected in terms of section 56 of NEMBA and various provincial ordinances and acts provide further legislative protection. Permits are therefore required to undertake a variety of activities, e.g. hunting, keeping, selling and other forms of direct use. Hunting affects only a very small proportion (0.43%) of the national population. Provinces have indicated that the amended norms and standards for the marking of rhinoceros and rhinoceros horn and for the hunting of rhinoceros for trophy hunting purposes (Government Gazette No. 35248; April

2012) are being implemented effectively. Trophy hunting of white rhinoceros is well-managed, and it is unlikely to have a deleterious effect on the population as a whole.

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