

RHINO CONSERVATION IN ZIMBABWE: 2012 - 2013

1.0 RHINO AREAS AND THEIR SIZES IN ZIMBABWE AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2013

A total area of 7 802 km² (3 023 km² = 39% is State land and 4 779 km² = 61% is private land) supports black rhinos and of 19 260 km² (15 124 km² = 80% is state land and 4 136 km² = 20% is private land) supports white rhinos. State land and private land that are supporting rhinos are shown in Table 1.

2.0 CURRENT STATUS OF RHINO POPULATIONS AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2013.

There were 753 rhinos (457 black and 296 white rhinos) in Zimbabwe as at 31 December 2013 (Table 1). 90% (410) of the black rhinos and 81% (240) of the white rhinos were on private land. Black rhino subpopulations that were over 100 individuals are found in Malilangwe, Save Valley Conservancy and Buby Valley Conservancy and of white rhinos were in Malilangwe only.

3.0 CHANGES IN RHINO POPULATIONS

Since 2000 black rhinos declined while white rhinos increased in numbers (Figure 1) both national populations are recovering. Changes in rhino national and subpopulations between 2012 and 2013 are given in Table 1. The national black rhino population increased by 7% and white increased by 4% between 2012 and 2013.

On Stateland, black rhinos declined by 4.4% and white rhinos increased by 5% between 2012 and 2013. All black and white rhino sub populations on stateland did not change in numbers between 2012 and 2013, except an increase in Sinamatella and a decline in Matopos.

On private land, black rhinos increased by about 8% and white rhinos by 6.7% between 2012 and 2013. Both black and white rhino subpopulations in Malilangwe, Save Valley Conservancy and Buby Valley Conservancy increased, while black rhino subpopulations in the Midlands Black rhino Conservancy, Stanley and Livingstone and Imire did not change, white rhino subpopulations in Imire did not change and white rhinos in Thetford and Eldorado declined between 2012 and 2013.

Table 1: Black and white rhino population sizes as at 31 December 2013

SPECIES & AREA	TOTAL Dec 2012	TOTAL Dec 2013	TREND
BLACK RHINO			
Matusadona	6	6	↔
Chipinge	17	17	↔
Matopos	18	18	↔
Sinamatella	4	6	↑
SUB-TOTAL	45	47	↑
Malilangwe	90	100	↑
Save Valley	100	103	↑
Bubye Valley	174	191	↑
Midlands	5	5	↔
Stanley & Livings stone	7	7	↔
Imire	4	4	↔
SUB-TOTAL	380	410	↑
GRAND TOTAL	426	457	↑
WHITE RHINO			
Main Camp	3	3	↔
Kyle	17	17	↔
Matopos	26	23	↓
Chivero	13	13	↔
SUB-TOTAL	59	56	↓
Malilangwe	109	117	↑
Save Valley	35	36	↑
Bubye Valley	65	74	↑
Thetford	10	8	↓
Eldorado	4	3	↓
Imire	2	2	↔
SUB-TOTAL	225	240	↑
GRAND TOTAL	284	296	↑

Key: ↔ Stable
 ↑ Increasing
 ↓ Decreasing

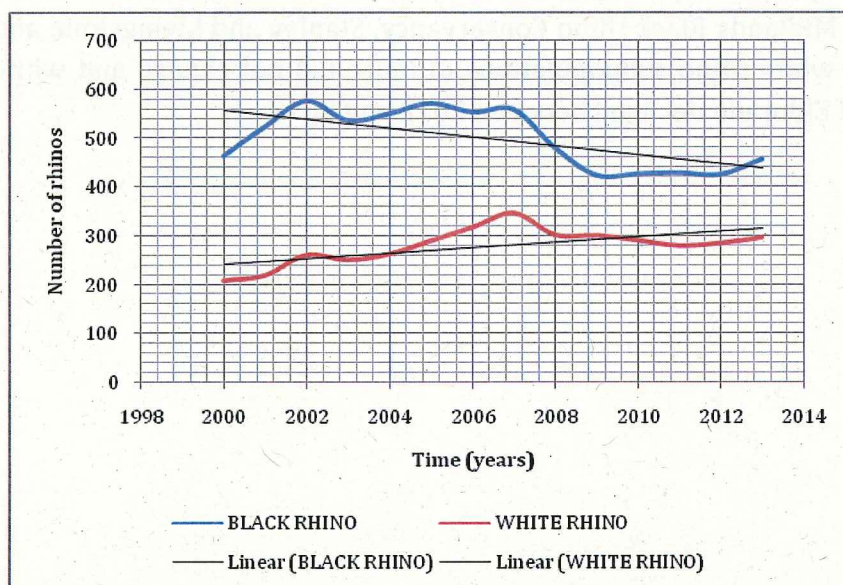


Figure 1: Trends in black and white rhino numbers in Zimbabwe from 2000 to 2013.

4.0 ILLEGAL KILLING OF RHINOS IN 2013

A total of 21 rhinos (7 black and 14 white) died between January and December 2013. Out of these mortalities, 16 (6 black and 10 white) were poached and the remainder (5) died due to other factors. (Tables 2, 3 and 4). There was a drop in poaching from a total of 52 rhinos in 2010, 38 in 2011, 22 in 2012 to 16 in 2013 (Figure 2).

Table 2. Black rhino mortality in Zimbabwe: 01 January- 31 December 2013

Area	Poached	Predation	Total
Save Valley	4	1	5
Bubye Valley	1	0	1
Midlands	1	0	1
TOTAL	6	1	7

Table 3. White rhino mortality in Zimbabwe: 01 January-31 December 2013

Entry no.	Area	Poached	Unknown	Fighting	Total
1	Matopos	2	0	0	2
	Chivero	0	1	1	2
2	Thetford	4	0	0	4
3	Eldorado	0	1	0	1
4	Bubye Valley	4	0	0	4
6	Malilangwe	0	1	0	1
TOTAL		10	3	1	14

Table 4. A Summary of rhino mortality January-December 2013

Species	Poaching	Unknown	Fight	Predation-lion	TOTAL
Black	6	0	0	1	7
White	10	3	1	0	14
TOTAL	16	3	3	1	21

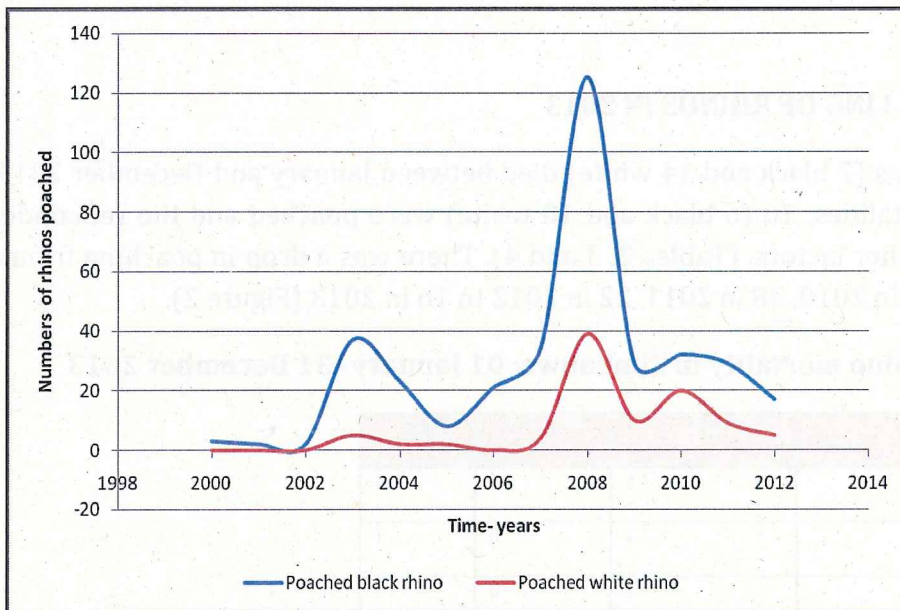


Figure 2: Trends in rhino poaching in Zimbabwe from 2000 to 2013.

5.0 AMENDMENT OF SECTION 128 OF CAP. 20:14

The Parks and Wild Life Act [Chapter 20:14] is amended by the repeal of section 128 and substitution of the following- “128 Special penalty for certain offences”

- (1) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, any person who is guilty of an offence under this Act involving;*
- (a) The unlawful killing or hunting of rhinoceros, or any other specially protected animal specified by the Minister by statutory instrument; or*
 - (b) The unlawful possession of, or trading in, ivory or any trophy of rhinoceros or any other specially protected animal that may be specified by the Minister by statutory instrument;*

Shall be liable-

- (i) On a first conviction, to imprisonment for a period of not less than nine years;*
- (ii) On a second or subsequent conviction, to imprisonment for a period of not less than eleven years.*

6.0 COMPENSATION VALUES

Persons convicted in rhino poaching cases are ordered to pay compensation for illegal killing of the rhino. Compensation value for rhino is USD120 000.00 per animal as gazetted in Statutory Instrument 56 of 2012.

7.0 PERMITS

There is no legal trade in rhinos and rhino products.

8.0 WORKSHOPS AND COMMUNITY AWARENESS

Legal Awareness campaigns are regularly carried out in the communities living adjacent to rhino holding properties. A number of stakeholder workshops that address challenges in the investigations and docket compilation by case officers are always being conducted. Organizations such as the Low-Veld Rhino trust have been active in Malilangwe, Save Valley and Bubye Valley Conservancies. Members of the judiciary also hold seminars that target wildlife related cases and sentencing provisions for various offences.

9.0 RHINO HORN STOCKPILE

The current rhino stockpile is at 4 961.31kgs. The horns are kept at Central Stores in a vault and guarded 24 hours in a day.

9.1 RHINO CRIME ANALYSIS FOR 2012 AND 2013

All rhino poaching incidents are reported to the responsible authorities. Of all the reported cases, 18 resulted in the arrest of the alleged offenders who were brought before the courts.

The majority of the reported incidents were of direct poaching by armed gangs and a few involved illegal possession of rhino horns and fire arms. A total of 18 Zimbabwean nationals and 4 Zambian nationals were arrested. A total of 10 firearms, 253 rounds of ammunition and 15 rhino horns were also recovered.

Those convicted received jail terms ranging from eight (8) years in prison to a maximum of eighteen (18) years in prison. A total of 9 cases are at various stages of investigations and some are still pending at our courts around the country.

Table 5 : Incidents of rhino poaching brought before the courts; 2012-2013

CASE NO.	SUSPECT/ACCUSED	NATURE OF OFFENCE	DATE/TIME/PLACE OF OCCURRENCE.	ZRP,CID DR.CRB.	RECOVERIES	OUTCOME
1	1. 2. 3	Rhino poaching and illegal possession of two rhino horns.	1/01/12 A rhino was poached at Eldorado Farm Suspects were arrested in Harare	Macheke CR01/01/12	2 rhino horns	All accused were sentenced to 9 years I.W.L
2	Suspects Unknown	Rhino poaching	24/01/12 Mbumbusi area - Sinamtela.	ZRP Hwange	10 AK47 spent cartridges.	Investigations in progress.
3	2 Suspects escaped 1 poacher was shot dead.	Rhino poaching.	24/01/12 Tshakabika area - Sinamatela.	ZRP Hwange CR 95/01/12	1 x AK47 rifle 34 live AK rounds 1 Nokia 1208 Knife 1 x small elephant tusk.	Pending
4	Suspect U/K	Poaching of female rhino	01/03/12 Gunundwe - Save Valley Conservancy.	Parks	Carcass sighted	Investigations in progress
5		Illegal possession of a firearm(2 counts) Conducting illegal hunts of rhinos (1 count)	3/03/12 Chipungu Bridge along Chiredzi Road.	Masvingo Rural CR32/03/12	1 x 303 rifle S/N4/5279 with silencer 4 rounds ammunition	Count 1. 3yrs I.W.L Count 2. 1yr I.W.L Count 3. 10yrs I.W.L

CASE NO.	SUSPECT/ACCUSED	NATURE OF OFFENCE	DATE/TIME/PLACE OF OCCURRENCE.	ZRP,CID DR.CRB.	RECOVERIES	OUTCOME
6	Suspect U/K	Poaching of female rhino	11/03/12 Matendere Ranch - Masvingo	Parks	Nil	Investigations in progress
7	Suspects U/K	Poaching of two female rhinos	06/04/12 Gunundwe - Save Valley Conservancy.	Parks	Nil	Investigations in progress
8	1.J 2.l	Rhino poaching	5/12 Bubye Valley Conservancy	ZRP Makado CR16/04/12 DR94/04/12 CRB549/12	1 x 303 rifle S/N33609 (telescopic) 4 rhino horns 12 rounds ammunition. 2 spent cartridges	Both accused sentenced to 16 years in prison
9	Suspect U/K	Rhino poaching (Identity of rhino was given as number 1257 rhino.) Grid Ref.VN491690.	Upper Chipangayi A one month old carcass was discovered with horns missing.	Parks	Carcass sighted	Investigations in progress
10	Suspect U/K	Rhino poaching	24/05/12 Hwange. The carcass was discovered at Dete Valley 3 with horns missing.	ZRP Dete CR27/05/12	9 spent cartridges	Investigations are in progress
11	1.N	Illegal possession of elephant tusks and rhino horn	9/01/13 Harare	CID Minerals Harare DR6/01/13 Borrowdale CR100/1/13	17 elephant tusks Total weight 36.2kgs 1 rhino horn weighing 4kgs	Sentenced to 9 yrs I.W.L
12	1.F 2. 3.	Illegal possession of ivory	23/01/13 Sinamatela	ZRP Hwange	2 rhino horns 2 elephant tusks	Pending
13	1.G 2. 3. 4.I 5.J	Poaching of four white rhinos Illegal possession of 5 elephant tusks	01/01/13 Thetford Estate	CID Minerals Harare	8 rhino horns 18 spent cartridges 1 x knife 5 elephant tusks 1 G3 rifle 12 rounds, 1 magazine 1 x 303 rifle	All 5 accused persons were sentenced to 18 years I.W.L
14	1. 2. 3. 4.	Rhino poaching	18/10/12 Bulawayo - Kezi main road.	Bulawayo Tredgold CR16/10/12 CRB38-41/12	95 x AK47 rounds. 1 empty AK47 Magazine. 1 x AK47 butt -less rifle 1 x Axe 1 x Knife	Pending
15		Rhino poaching in Save Valley Conservancy	22/04/13 Save Valley Conservancy	Chiredzi CR102/04/13 DR 05/04/13 CRBMS880283 /13	1 x 303 rifle 25 rounds for 303 rifle 20 rounds for an FN rifle	L. Adhaki was sentenced to 7yrs I.W.L
16	Unknown	Rhino poaching	06/11/13 Matopo National Parks		26 AK47 spent cartridges 1 A.K live round	pending
17	Unknown	Rhino poaching	26 /12/13 Midlands Black rhino Conservancy	Kwekwe Rural CR70/12/13 DR7/1/14	7 AK47 spent cartridges	Pending
18	1. 2. 3.	Rhino poaching	16/11/12 Matendere Ranch - Save Valley Conservancy.	CID Masvingo	1 x A.K47 rifle 50 rounds ammunition. 1 x G3 rifle	Pending

12.0 CHALLENGES

Zimbabwe is faced with the following challenges;

- Continued rhino poaching and illegal trade in rhino horn
- Human encroachment in rhino areas.
- Inadequate resources for rhino protection and sustain awareness campaigns- human, equipment, financial etc.