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OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA



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RHINOCEROSSES

The attached document has been submitted by the Secretariat at the request of IUCN, in relation to agenda item 54.2 on *Rhinoceroses**.

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African Rhinoceroses – Latest trends in rhino numbers and poaching

An update to Doc 54-2-Annexe 2 from the IUCN Species Survival Commission's (IUCN/SSC) African Rhino Specialist Group to the CITES Secretariat pursuant to Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev. CoP15)

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1. Introduction

The CITES Parties, through *Resolution Conf 9.14 (Rev. CoP15)* mandated IUCN/SSC's African Rhino Specialist Group (AfRSG), Asian Rhino Specialist Group (AsRSG) and TRAFFIC to prepare a report for the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP16) "*on the national and continental conservation status of African and Asian rhinoceros species, trade in specimens of rhinoceros, stocks of specimens of rhinoceros and stock management, incidents of illegal killing of rhinoceroses, enforcement issues, and conservation actions and management strategies, with an evaluation of their effectiveness*" and "*measures by implicated states to end illegal use and consumption of rhino parts and derivatives*". This report (Emslie et al 2012) was submitted to the CITES Secretariat and is included as Annexe 2 to the CITES Secretariat's report on rhinos for CoP16 (Doc CoP16-54-02-rev 1). This report gave African rhino numbers as of the end of December 2010 and continental poaching statistics by country up to the end of September 2012. The report however indicated that the AfRSG should be able to provide Parties at CITES CoP16 with updated rhino numbers as of December 2012. This document serves to provide Parties with updated numbers and poaching statistics that were compiled at the recent 11th meeting of IUCN SSC AfRSG held in Kenya from the 17-22 February 2013.

2. Status and Trends

Despite high and increasing levels of poaching, both rhino species have continued to increase in the wild, with **white rhino** (*Ceratotherium simum*) up from 20,165 in 2010 to 20,405 and **black rhino** (*Diceros bicornis*) up from 4,880 in 2010 to 5,055 (Table 1 & Figure 1).

Table 1: Provisional estimated numbers of African rhino by country as of 31 December 2012 (With exception of northern white rhino subspecies and species totals rounded to nearest 5)

Species Subspecies	White rhino				Black rhino				Trend	Total TotalB&W
	C.s.cottoni	C.s.simum	TotalWR	Trend	D.b.bicornis	D.b.michaeli	D.b.minor	TotalBR		
	(northern)	(southern)			(south-western)	(eastern)	(southern-central)			
Angola					1			1	Min	1
Botswana		185	185	Up			9	9	Up	194
Kenya	4	394	394	Up		631		631	Up	1,025
Malawi							26	26	Up	26
Mozambique		1?	1	Down			0?	0	?	1
Namibia		524	524	Up	1,750			1,750	Stable	2,274
South Africa		18,910	18,910	Up	206	68	1,770	2,044	Up	20,954
Swaziland		84	84	Stable			18	18	Up	102
Tanzania						100	27	127	Up?	127
Uganda		14	14	Up						14
Zambia		10	10	Up			27	27	Stable	37
Zimbabwe		283	283	Down			422	422	Down	705
Totals	4	20,404	20,405		1,957	799	2,299	5,055		25,460

The majority of Africa's (black and white) rhinos (98.0%) continue to be conserved by four range States: South Africa, Namibia, Kenya and Zimbabwe (Table 1). Botswana, Tanzania and Swaziland each conserve over 100 rhinos with smaller numbers in Zambia, Malawi, Uganda, Mozambique and Angola.

While numbers of both species have continued to increase, the continued escalation in population growth has slowed.

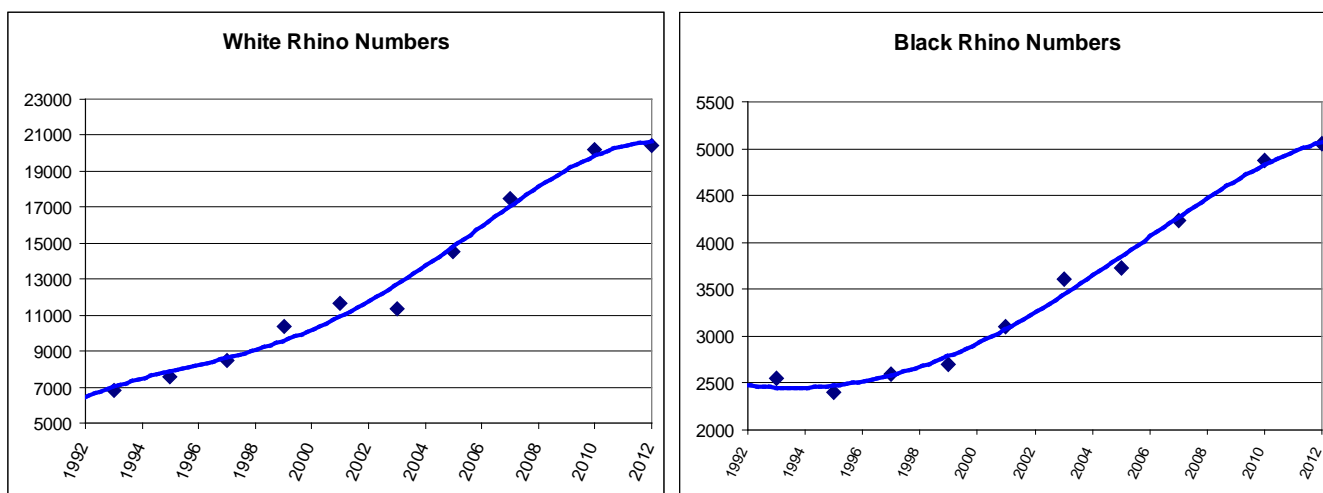


Figure 1: Changes in numbers of white and black rhino in Africa 1991-2012 with fitted fourth order polynomial trend lines (IUCN SSC AfRSG data)

3. Poaching and illegal killing

From 2006 through to 20 February 2012, a minimum of 2,387 rhino were reportedly poached in 11 of the 12 rhino range States in Africa. The updated table shows that poaching has escalated significantly since September 2012, and especially in the last quarter of 2012. The 2012 continental total reached 745 - up from the 645 projected for 2012 based on average poaching over the first nine months of the year. This represents a 43% increase from 2011-12.

Table 2: Minimum numbers of recorded poached rhinos in Africa, 2006 – 20 Feb 2013
(Data from AfRSG, TRAFFIC and CITES Rhino Working Group)

Country	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013 to 20 Feb	Country Totals	2012 poaching as % of 2012 popn estimates
Botswana	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	1.03%
DR Congo	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	4	
Kenya	3	1	6	21	22	25	29	5	112	2.83%
Malawi	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	7.69%
Mozambique	0	9	5	15	16	10	12	?	67	1200.00%
Namibia	0	0	0	2	2	0	1	0	5	0.04%
South Africa	36	13	83	122	333	448	668	102	1805	3.19%
Swaziland	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0.00%
Tanzania	0	0	2	0	1	0	2	0	5	1.57%
Uganda	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
Zambia	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.00%
Zimbabwe	21	38	164	39	52	35	29	4	382	4.11%
Total	60	62	262	201	426	520	745	111	2387	2.93%
Poached/day	0.16	0.17	0.72	0.55	1.17	1.42	2.04	2.18		
Projected								794		

The average numbers of rhinos poached per day across the continent increased from 1.70/day in the first nine months of 2012 to 3.07/day in the last quarter of the year; with poaching significantly increasing in Kenya and Zimbabwe as well as South Africa during this period. The average poaching to date in 2013 (up to 20 Feb) is 2.18/day = 1 rhino every 11 hours. Overall at continental level losses in 2012 approached 3%. While births continue to exceed deaths at a continental level, if the rate of increase in poaching from 2011- 2012 continues, modeling indicates that the tipping point when numbers start to decline could be reached as soon as 2015.

South Africa conserves more rhinos than any other country with 83% of Africa's rhinos and 73% of wild rhinos in the world. South Africa has also continued to experience the highest absolute levels of poaching, although in relative terms some other range States have been suffering similar or higher levels of poaching. Figure 3 from the joint IUCN/TRAFFIC report has been updated to include data for the last quarter of 2012 and the first two months of 2013. Despite increased efforts described in the joint IUCN/TRAFFIC Report (Emslie et al 2012) the basic pattern remains the same with illegal killing of rhino increasing every year since 2007. The updated Figure 3 also shows that for the third year in a row the highest levels of poaching have occurred in the fourth quarter. Figure 3 shows there was a marked spike in recorded poaching in the last quarter of 2012 and that poaching in the first two months of 2013 remains at historically high levels.

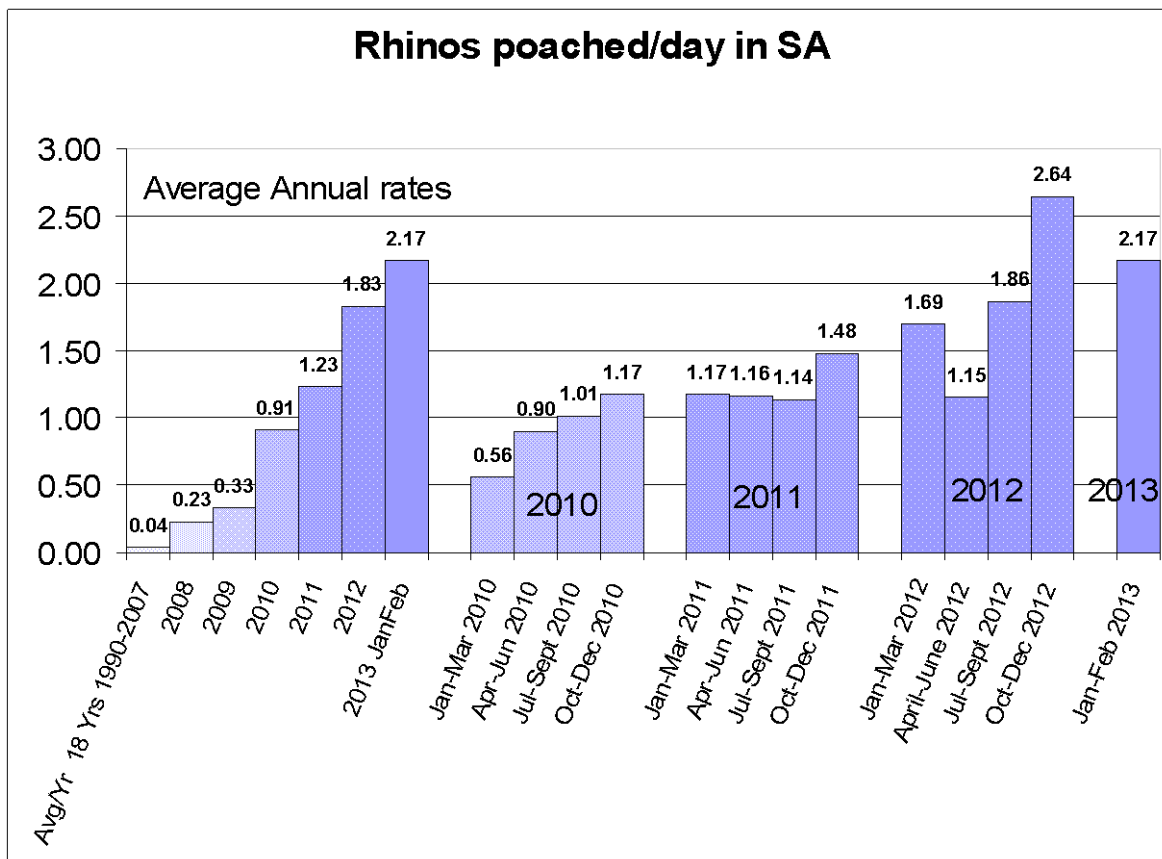


Figure 3: Rhino poaching per day in South Africa by year and by quarter since January 2010
 (Sources: South African National Wildlife Crime Reaction Unit & Dept. of Environmental Affairs)

While it is difficult to conclusively determine the causes behind short-term fluctuations in rates of poaching; the successful clamp down on psuedohunting by South Africa in Feb-Apr 2012 will have significantly constricted the illicit rhino horn supply. Criminals could be expected look for alternative sources of horn such as illegal dehorning, poaching, thefts or robberies. However increases in poaching in Kenya and Zimbabwe in the last quarter of 2012 suggest that other factors that are completely unrelated to South Africa's policy decisions and legislative and law enforcement changes (such as the escalation in demand in end user countries) could also be behind these increases.

Anti-poaching efforts in South Africa continue to increase; and while numbers of rhino related arrests per day in South Africa have been rising year on year, so have poaching levels.

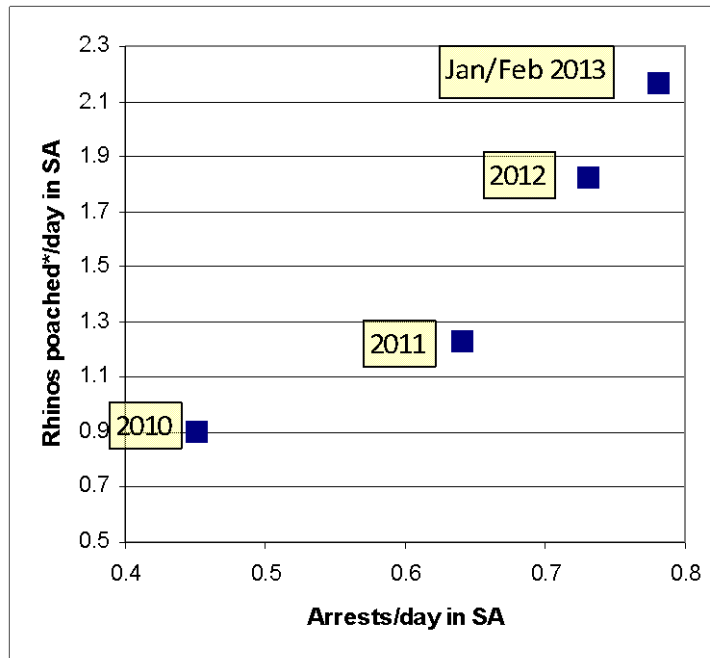


Figure 4: Rhino poaching per day in South Africa compared to Rhino related Arrests by year since January 2010 (Source: *South African Dept. of Environmental Affairs*)

Acknowledgements and main sources of information

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References

Emslie RH, Milliken T, and Talukdar B (2012) *African and Asian Rhinoceroses – Status, Conservation and Trade*. CoP16, Doc. 54-2-Annexe 2 CITES Secretariat, Geneva, Switzerland.