AMENDMENTS TO APPENDICES I AND II OF THE CONVENTION

Other Proposals

A. PROPOSAL

Transfer of the Zimbabwe population of Ceratotherium simum from Appendix I to Appendix II (see footnote).

B. PROPONENT

Zimbabwe.

C: SUPPORTING STATEMENT

1. Taxonomy

11. Class:	Mammalia	
12. Order:	Perissodactyla	
13. Family:	Rhinocerotidae	
14. Species:	*Ceratotherium simum* (Burchell, 1817)	
Subspecies:	*Ceratotherium simum simum*	
15. Common names:	English:	white rhino square-lipped rhino
	French:	rhinocéros blanc rhinoceros de Burchell
	Spanish:	Rinoceronte blanco Rinoceronte chato
	German:	Breitmaulnashorn
	Portuguese:	Rinoceronte blanco
16. Code numbers:	CITES A-118.003.001.001 ISIS 5301418003001001001	

Footnote: Zimbabwe's preferred proposal is for a quota for commercial trade in rhino horn and sport hunting trophies in Appendix I. However, this requires prior acceptance of draft resolution *in document Doc. 8.50*. In the event that this draft resolution is accepted, this proposal can be amended to permit a quota for Appendix I trade. This proposal should be considered together with proposal to transfer the black rhino (*Diceros bicornis)* population of Zimbabwe to Appendix II.

2. Biological Data

21. Distribution: *Historical*: White rhino covered the continent of Africa from the Mediterranean coast to South Africa during the Pleistocene*[1]*. They were eliminated even more quickly than the black rhino in the 18th and 19th centuries and, by the turn of the 20th century, there were reported to be only

about 10 animals of the southern subspecies alive in Zululand in southern Africa*[2]*. The last surviving white rhino in Zimbabwe in the 19th century is thought to have been shot at Mpanda's Kraal in the north-east of the country in 1895*[1]*.

In 1929, the first official count in Umfulozi Reserve revealed 120 animals. An aerial survey in 1960 gave an estimate of 700. Today there are at least 4,500 animals in South Africa*[3]* and the species is distributed throughout southern Africa.

Current: From the original nucleus in Natal, white rhino have been re-introduced to most southern African states. They were translocated to Zimbabwe in the 1960s by the Department and by private individuals. Today they occur in Hwange National Park and the Matetsi complex in Matabeleland North and in a number of smaller state protected areas. There are also significant numbers on private farms in various parts of Zimbabwe.

22. Population

Estimates: The AERSG estimated numbers in Zimbabwe at 208 in 1987*[4]*. The total of 370 given below is higher than could be accounted for by simple population increase in 4 years, but is considered a more accurate estimate than previous attempts. White rhino are relatively easy to count and, because they occur in Zimbabwe in small populations, their numbers are usually well known to the landholder or to the Parks staff.

AREA	ESTIMATE
Hwange National Park	150
Kyle Recreational Park	50
Matopos National Park	50
McIlwaine Recreational Park	20
Kasuma Pan National Park	10
State Forest Areas	40
Commercial Farms	50
TOTALS	**370**

Trends: The white rhino population appears to be increasing at a maximum growth rate of about 6-7%. Some animals were lost in a severe drought in the south-east lowveld and Matabeleland South Province in 1982-83, and there have been at least 15 killed by illegal hunters in Matabeleland North (6 in Kasuma Pan National Park and 9 in Hwange National Park) in the last two years. One large bull was killed by local poachers in Kyle Recreational Park in 1988.

23. Habitat: Player and Feely*[5]* listed four basic habitat requirements for white rhino: short grasslands, availability of water, thick bush cover and relatively flat terrain. Zimbabwe is not overly endowed with grasslands but the habitat

requirements for rhino are met in a number of parts of the country. There is no immediate threat to their habitats but it is possible that their numbers could expand greatly in certain parts of the country which have traditionally been regarded as cattle areas provided they have a high economic value to the landholder.

3. Trade Data:

31. National Utilization: There is very little utilization of white rhino in Zimbabwe. Landholders who have invested in the animals by purchasing them from South Africa, or from the Department of National Parks in Zimbabwe, or from other local farmers, are allowed to offer animals for sport hunting. The Department of National Parks' policy towards such hunting is that landholders wishing to hunt should ensure that they have self-sustaining populations of white rhino before commencing hunting because they will not be permitted to purchase further animals from the state for their population once they have decided to utilize it. However, fewer than one or two animals are taken in any particular year.

The Department of National Parks has started removing horns from all the animals in Hwange National Park to protect them against illegal hunters. Because of their bulk and the fact that they spend large amounts of time exposed when grazing in short grasslands, white rhino are extremely vulnerable to illegal hunters. Having gone to considerable expense and effort to re-establish white rhino in Hwange National Park, this management approach is preferred to translocating them to other areas (which may prove to be equally insecure). Together with other white rhino horns which have accumulated from natural mortality and other sources over the past 20 years, the Department is keen to sell the horns to offset the management costs entailed in the present exercise.

32. Legal International Trade: International commercial trade in the parts and derivatives of white rhino is prohibited under the Appendix I listing of the species.

Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe seek to trade horn internationally. The horn would not result from direct exploitation of the species but rather arise from the products of natural mortality and management of live animals (i.e. removal of horns).

The trade would be conducted according to the highest standards, perhaps at a government-to-government level. The Southern African Centre for Ivory Marketing may prove to be a suitable, single outlet for such trade in that all stocks would be fully accounted for and transactions would be open to international scrutiny. All three states are amenable to suggestions from the Conference of the Parties in respect of the necessary controls to be applied to ensure that such trade will not threaten precarious rhino populations elsewhere.

Zimbabwe's preference is for a quota for commercial trade in Appendix I, since this continues to reflect the endangered status of the species and shows willingness to be accountable to the international community for any trade undertaken. Although there is no precedent for this under present quota systems, it requires only the approval of a resolution by the Conference of the

Parties (draft resolution *in document Doc. 8.50* provides for a quota system in Appendix I covering commercial trade, sport hunting and captive-breeding operations).

33. Illegal Trade: The previous paragraph refers.

34. Potential Trade Threats: The trade threat to rhino is actual - not potential. There is a real market demand for the product based on centuries of its use in traditional medicines in the Far East*[6]* and recent data suggest it may be efficacious*[7]*.

The world demand is estimated at about 5 tonnes per annum and the sustainable yield from Africa is far lower than this (less than 1 tonne per annum). The question to be asked is whether it would be better to recognize this market, which is well established and has persisted for centuries, and to provide a limited supply of legal horn to it or whether to continue with the present unworkable trade ban which threatens the survival of the species.

341. Live Specimens: There is no significant threat from sale of live specimens. The Natal Parks Board in South Africa have been selling white rhino for a number of years to re-establish populations elsewhere in South Africa and in neighbouring countries.

342. Parts and Derivatives: The major trade product is the horn of rhino but Bradley-Martin*[8]* has detailed the other parts and derivatives which are in demand. These include skin, organs and tissues.

4. Protection Status

41. National: The species is Specially Protected in Zimbabwe which is the maximum legal protection it can be accorded. Penalties for illegal hunting or trafficking in rhino horns include jail sentences of up to 15 years and fines of up to Z$15,000. Law enforcement staff are indemnified against legal proceedings for killing rhino poachers - so that illegal hunting of rhino may effectively carry the death sentence. None of this has prevented the illegal killing of nearly 1,000 black rhinos.

42. International: The species is listed in Appendix I of CITES and few countries in their domestic legislation permit the import of rhino horn.

43. Additional Protection Needs: Rhino cannot be protected through legislation. White rhino are a species which may benefit considerably through ranching operations for horn production. Preliminary calculations indicate that, managed for a sustainable yield of horns from live animals, white rhino could provide a return from land considerably higher than that for any form of domestic livestock production.

5. Information on Similar Species

The closely related northern subspecies (Ceratotherium s. cottoni) is extremely vulnerable. It survives now in only one small population in northern Zaire (Garamba National Park) and, although its numbers are increasing*[10]*, it still would be considered "Critical" under the Mace-Lande criteria*[11]* with fewer than 50 animals.

From the arguments advanced elsewhere in this proposal and in the proposal for permitting commercial trade in black rhino horn *(Doc. 8.49)*, it is not envisaged that legal commercial trade in the horn of the southern white rhino could in any way make the status of the northern white rhino more vulnerable.

All rhino species are subject to pressure from illegal hunting. The more highly valued horn from Asian species gives even greater incentives to local hunters. In the context of this proposal, there would be little additional pressure placed on Asian species if legal international trade were permitted from the southern African region. Firstly, the horns are easily distinguishable on chemical grounds*[9]*. Secondly, and more importantly, dealers in rhino horn are able to distinguish Asian species from African with little difficulty. The very high prices paid for Asian rhino horns (over US$10,000/kg) are an obvious indicator that the horns are easily separable.

6. Comments from Countries of Origin

The southern white rhino population of Africa now survives in viable populations in the wild in only three countries - Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

COUNTRY	WHITE RHINO
Namibia	100
South Africa	4,500
Zimbabwe	350
TOTAL (rounded)	**5,000**

All three Parties support the proposal to trade in rhino horn.

7. Additional Remarks

The white rhino population of southern Africa is increasing at its maximum growth rate and can no longer be considered in danger of extinction. It is doubtful if it should be listed in Appendix I. Certainly, there is no basis to prohibit legal trade in the products of the species for the following reasons :

a) The legal products are not obtained by killing the animals;

b) The trade would clearly be beneficial to the conservation of the species;

c) The countries of origin are in support of the proposal.

The question arises whether the species should be transferred to Appendix II in an annotated form to permit legal trade (whilst retaining Appendix I characteristics in all other aspects) or whether a quota should be allocated for commercial trade whilst

retaining the species in Appendix I. Draft resolutions in documents *Doc. 8.48, Doc. 8.49* and *Doc. 8.50* provide a rationale for granting a quota in Appendix I.

This proposal should be considered jointly with a similar proposal for the black rhinoceros (Diceros bicornis) in Zimbabwe which is submitted separately because the taxonomy of rhino does not lend itself to proposing an entire taxon for listing in Appendix II. The family *Rhinocerotidae* includes the Asian species and the genera of black and white rhino are different. If the Asian Parties feel similarly about their species then it may appropriate to transfer the entire taxon to Appendix II or, better still, to grant a quota for trade in horn in Appendix I.

The Zimbabwe proposals should be considered jointly with the proposals from Namibia[1] and South Africa for both black and white rhinoceros. Considered as regional populations, neither species is in danger of extinction according to the Mace-Lande criteria*[11]* and would merit Appendix II listing.

8. References

1. Smithers Reay H. N., (1983). THE MAMMALS OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN SUBREGION. Univ. Pretoria.

2. Renshaw, (1904). Reported in Smithers Reay H. N. (1983). THE MAMMALS OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN SUBREGION. Univ. Pretoria. p359.

3. Brooks P.M., (1991). Conservation Plan for the black rhinoceros in South Africa and Namibia. In: Proc. International Rhino Conference, San Diego, California, USA, May 1991 (in press).

4. Cumming D.H.M., Du Toit R.F. and S.N. Stuart, (1990) (Eds.). AFRICAN ELEPHANTS AND RHINOS: Status Survey and Conservation Action Plan. IUCN, Gland, Switzerland.

5. Player I.C. and J.M. Feely, (1960). A preliminary report on the square-lipped rhinoceros (*Ceratotherium simum simum*). Lammergeyer 1: 3-21.

6. Martin, Esmond Bradley, (1980). The international trade in rhinoceros products. IUCN, Gland.

7. Paul Pui-Hay But, Lai-Ching Lung and Yan-Kit Tam, (1990). Ethnopharmacology of rhinoceros horn. I: Antipyretic effects of rhinoceros horn and other animal horns. Journal of Ethnopharmacology 30: 157-168.

8. Martin, Esmond Bradley, (1980). Rhinoceros products in international commerce. In: Proc. International Rhino Conference, San Diego, California, USA, May 1991 (in press).

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[1] Nambia did not submit such a proposal. (Note from the Secretariat).

9. van der Merwe, N., (1991). Chemical characteristics of rhino horn as determined by isotopic analysis. In: Proc. International Rhino Conference, San Diego, California, USA, May 1991 (in press).

10. Smith K. and F. Smith, (1991). Conserving rhinos in Garamba National Park. In: Proc. International Rhino Conference, San Diego, California, USA, May 1991 (in press).

11. Mace G.M. and R. Lande, (1991). Assessing extinction threats: towards a re-evaluation of IUCN threatened species categories. Conservation Biology, in press. Also in: CBSG News 2(2): 5-7.