

in others are part of the overall response to this renewed pressure, and a search is now underway locally for teams of poachers who have been identified through investigatory work by the IRF/WWF rhino monitoring unit.

Good news over this same period is that the number of rhino births in southern Zimbabwe has significantly exceeded poaching losses. Conservancies in this region now contain 330 black rhinos. So, despite the major political, financial and logistical problems that can complicate the management of these populations, black rhino numbers in southern Zimbabwe are still growing faster than anywhere else in Africa.

There have also been encouraging developments in regional cooperation over rhino management. With funding from IRF, negotiations are now well underway for the translocation of a male black rhino from Zimbabwe to the Khama Rhino Sanctuary in Botswana. This is a test case for the translocation of additional rhinos from Zimbabwe to Botswana, which has been difficult to arrange because of Botswana's veterinary restrictions. Another positive move has been the agreement by wildlife management authorities in Zimbabwe and South Africa to proceed with a feasibility study for a proposed rhino intensive management facility in the Shashe-Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area. This facility will be designed to enable a phased reintroduction of zoo-bred black rhinos to protected areas of natural habitat in their native Africa.

Raoul du Toit
Southern Africa Development Community
Regional Programme for Rhino Conservation

Indian Rhino Update

The exchange project of the Indian Rhino Program is progressing well. By the end of this year, three female rhinos from San Diego Zoo's Wild Animal Park are scheduled to be transferred to the quarantine facility at India's Delhi Zoo. Also included in the exchange will be three reticulated giraffes and three Burchell's zebras that have been collected from several U.S. zoos and private institutions. After the three female rhinos clear quarantine, two will be taken to the Sanjay Gandhi Biological Park in Patna, and one animal will remain at the Delhi Zoo. In exchange, two captive male rhinos from Patna and one from Delhi Zoo will be transported to the United States. All three males are young animals that are destined to play an important role in this international effort, which seeks to maximize genetic diversity and the global breeding potential of captive populations.

IRF's Indian conservation partners have been working very hard to accomplish all of the tasks required to start the relocation project of the Indian Rhino Program, which has been laid out in Indian Rhino Vision 2020. Assessments of areas destined for rhino reintroduction have been undertaken, and the issues highlighted in the assessment reports are now being addressed, including infrastructure needs within the parks designated for

the first rhino relocations. Efforts also are being made to involve local villages in relocation activities, with personnel being trained to undertake various aspects of the project. Experienced rhino relocation teams from Nepal are helping to train new teams from Kaziranga National Park and the Pabitora Wildlife Sanctuary.



Jorg Hess

In all, a flurry of activity, involving many partners in the Indian Rhino Program, is well underway, funded by the North American Save the Rhinos Campaign.

Randy Rieches, Curator of Mammals
San Diego Zoo's Wild Animal Park

Sumatran Rhino Update

Early this year on Sumatra, six of the Rhino Protection Units (RPU) stationed in Bukit Barison Selatan National Park traveled to Kerinci Seblat National Park in an effort to trap the last rhinos – perhaps one or two - thought to exist in that area. The objective was to translocate any remaining animals from an area where poaching still constitutes a significant threat to Bukit Barison Selatan, where the rhino population is both substantial, stable, and perhaps even increasing, and no new traps set by poachers have been found in recent months. After surveying a large section of the park without finding fresh signs of rhino, however, the rescue attempt was abandoned and the RPU returned to their base camps.