



JANUARY 2006

Although the EAZA Rhino Campaign was launched in September 2005 we do not usually expect too much happening until well into the new year as zoos start to run their own campaign activities, however, already we are seeing the results of the hard work put into the preparation of the campaign by EAZA, Save the Rhino International and the many experts in zoos and in the field. It is very obvious that not only this EAZA Campaign is going to be as popular as the others but it is also shaping up to make the contribution to rhino conservation we had hoped for. At the beginning of this new year the signs are very encouraging, however there is a long way to go and we need the support of every one of the EAZA zoos, their visitors and the many other organisations that are involved if we are to reach our goals.

While many of us in Europe are enjoying the cooler weather of the winter, wild rhinos carry on their lives as usual, the vast majority relying on park rangers and guards to ensure their survival. These dedicated people, their families and all those that provide the backup so they can do their work effectively rarely have time to enjoy the festive season and celebrate the coming of a new year. Instead they are out there facing the challenges of life in harsh conditions, often under-resourced and invariably underpaid. This year will see European (and other zoo partners) zoos and our supporters have the opportunity to make a significant difference to rhino conservation and go some way to see a more secure future for all species. With this there will be a legacy of support and partnerships that will endure.

Let's make the effort to support the campaign, get involved in the projects and enjoy rhinos in your zoos, knowing that we are doing something to ensure these important and magnificent animals continue to contribute to life in Africa and Asia.

Nick Lindsay, Zoological Society of London
Chair of the EAZA Save the Rhinos Campaign

NEWS FROM THE FIELD

Project K: Rhino protection Units for Javan and Sumatran Rhino in Indonesia

The Rhino Protection Units (RPUs) continue to be very successful in suppressing and preventing poaching of Javan and Sumatran rhinos in key conservation areas in Indonesia. Both species are very rare and critically endangered, and their worldwide survival depends largely on the preservation of the Javan Rhino populations in Ujung Kulon (40-50 animals, or ~ 95 % of the world population) and the Sumatran Rhino populations in Bukit Barisan Selatan, Way Kambas and Gunung Leuser (total ~ 200 animals, or ~ 70 % of the world population).

Since the start of the program in 1997 only two incidents of successful rhino poaching have been recorded and in some areas there are early signs of recovery of the population. Nevertheless there is a continuing serious threat from poaching as the illegal market for rhino horns is still flourishing. Poaching of rhinos and other wildlife will certainly re-emerge if the protection provided by the RPUs is diminished. In fact even more RPUs will be needed in the future when the rhino populations recover and rhinos return to areas where they were exterminated previously.

The RPU program has, since its inception, been funded by a coalition of international organizations and private donors led by the International Rhino Foundation. Continued financial support is crucial for the program to succeed and to prevent the extinction of these two unique species. The funds and the international exposure generated by the EAZA Rhino Campaign are a very important component of the funding strategy of the RPU program.

Recently the RPUs have been involved, together with staff of the Parks and conservation organizations, in the rescue and relocation of two young female Sumatran rhinos that strayed out of the protection of the reserve. It is not known why these animals moved into the densely populated fringes of the reserves, but one may speculate that it is a sign of increasing numbers of rhinos inside.

The first rhino, called "Ratu", was found in a village south of Way Kambas NP on 20 September 2005. When attempts to drive her back to the forest failed, because of the huge crowds of onlookers, it was decided to move her to the Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary, a managed breeding facility nearby.

The second female, called "Rosa", was already for over a year under protection of the RPUs as she became more and more habituated to humans and ventured further and further out of the reserve. Two RPUs were providing round-the-clock protection for this animal, but when she was once found walking on a village market about 30 km outside the reserve, it became obvious, sadly enough, that the situation had become unmanageable and would become an unsustainable burden on the RPU program. On 29 November Rosa was also relocated to the SRS after being prepared for the transport for about two months in a spacious boma constructed in the Park. Both animals are adjusting well in the SRS where they will eventually be given a 20ha fenced enclosure in natural habitat (dense tropical forest). They supplement the pair of older Sumatran rhinos that has been there since 1998 but that has, so far, not yet produced offspring.

On 26 and 27 February 2006 a workshop on the update of the Indonesian Rhino Conservation Strategy will be conducted in Jakarta, with representatives of the management authorities, rhino specialists and donor agencies participating. The current status will be evaluated and plans for the future will be formulated. A long-term strategy with clearly defined targets and time lines and rigorous periodic evaluation will be developed to reach the targets of 'sustainable wild populations' for both species. Currently numbers of both South-East Asian rhino species are far below target and especially the status of the Javan rhino is reason for serious concern. Numbers of rhino in Ujung Kulon, the only viable population, have been stagnant for 30 years, despite poaching being eliminated now. For the survival of this species the establishment of other populations is essential, but politically and logistically challenging.

Project L: Establishment of two additional rhino protection units

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Project M: Enhanced community outreach programme

Find below some of the 2005 highlights from Dr Nan Shaffer at Sos Rhino:

- Our Rangers helped WWF find more rhinos in Sabah. A little expertise can go a long way
- We have been 100% successful in obtaining submitted grants. They include funds from US Fish & Wildlife Service, Asian Rhino Project, and we are in the finals on EAZA's Rhino Campaign

- We have gained support for our programs from prestigious institutions in Europe such as Zurich Zoo, Dublin Zoo, and Chester Zoo to name a few

Zoo Zurich Educator in Tabin:

http://sosrhino.org/news/fieldreport_02_2005.php

Edwin Bosi's visit to Zoo Zurich:

http://sosrhino.org/news/fieldreport_08_2005.php

- Dr Edwin Bosi gave an inspiring speech at the SITE meeting about our Community Outreach Program and continues to engage villagers and oil palm plantation owners and employees to assist our RPUs in their vigorous protection efforts
- Our Volunteer Program continues to gain worldwide popularity particularly among individuals in the zoo and conservation biology field. Educators, researchers, and animals keepers from Australia, Switzerland and the UK participated in 2005
- In 2006 we will double in size by adding 10 more rangers, volunteer coordinators, a Master's student in Eco-Tourism, and field coordinator. With more publicity from awarded grants and PR, the volunteer program is also expected to grow. We must be vigilant in exploring other avenues of support while maintaining responsiveness to current donors to maintain this growth. An efficient infrastructure, effective promotional materials and maintenance of a quality program will facilitate our expansion and goals. Some of the measures of success for this year will be:
 - Complete and strengthen the barrier of protection for Tabin Reserve
 - Increase translation of results of surveys and patrols to donors, stakeholders and the scientific community
 - Strengthen relationships and increase support from local government, NGOs and community groups
 - Complete the process for non profit status in Malaysia
 - Establish a 5-year plan and promotional package
 - Institute a development infrastructure and establish targets
 - Increase support from local institutions and individuals...

More information at: www.sosrhino.org

FUNDRAISING

A Save the Rhino supporter fundraises for Sumatran rhinos: Rhino Protection Units for Javan and Sumatran rhinos in Indonesia

Save the Rhino supporter Marga van Reijn held a fundraising event at her home. She was particularly keen on Sumatran rhinos, and asked whether the funds she would raise could be put towards a Sumatran rhino project. Marga's event has been very successful as the total amount raised is 1550 euros for Project K of the EAZA Rhino Campaign

Here is a summary of the debrief from Marga:

"I am still a bit exhausted but thrilled about the party. The party started at 16.00h and ended at 24.00h. The art gallery who helped us came with 34 high-quality oil paintings. On the pricelist we

printed information about the Sumatran rhino project. Our bronze rhino in the garden was in the spotlights and we had torches in our garden. We had six helpers (and my two kids) in red Save the Rhino T-shirts. They were the 'Red Rhinos'. They did a great job in helping the kids with decorating paper rhino faces, playing a 'Save the rain forest game', collecting donations in the Save the Rhino box, selling merchandise and helping making the guests happy with drinks, food and information.

The council donated cotton shopping bags and 'sustainable shopping guides'. When guests left, they were given a bag, a brochure and a 'Thank You letter' with some food for thought. We sold some beautiful framed animal drawings of the very talented Iulia Cretu. Everybody agreed that the combination of art, wildlife conservation / education and kids' artwork is a great combination. I hope I will be able to continue this formula, because it works and it is great fun."

Lille Zoo supports the Campaign

We have received a donation of 760 euros from Lille Zoo (France).

RHINO BIRTHS

This new section will be online soon, with pictures of some of the babies, born during the Campaign-year.

- Greater one horned rhinos:
 - 1 in Tierpark Berlin (Germany)
 - 1 in Rotterdam (Netherlands)
- Black rhinos:
 - 2 in Dvur Kralove (Czech Republic)
 - 1 in Magdeburg (Germany)
- White rhinos:
 - 7 (more details on the website very soon)

NEWS FROM THE ZOOS

Activities and Material

News about activities and materials from participating zoos has been published on the News section of the Campaign website:

<http://www.rhinocampaign.net/>

More details can also be found on the Campaign's section of the EAZA website:

<http://www.eaza.net>

MEETINGS

On the first of June 2006, Save the Rhino International will be organising the Rhino Mayday in conjunction with ZSL and BIAZA. Nick Lindsay, from ZSL, chair of the EAZA Rhino Campaign, will also chair this new Rhino Mayday. All the money raised will go to the Rhino Campaign.

The Rhino Mayday aims to present Rhinos and Rhino conservation to specialists, zoo staff as members of the general public. We particularly want to focus on the projects selected for the Campaign and hope many of the Campaign's coordinators will make a presentation about their rhino work this day.

The Mayday will take place at the Zoological Society of London's Huxley Conference Theatre in Regent's Park, Central London. Whether you are working in a zoo, a conservation organisation or just have an interest in Rhino conservation, do join us for an excellent event.

For tickets and more information, please contact:

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FUNDRAISING

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Then simply use your credit card to donate.

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