



**Research Committee
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The aim of the future is to keep Indian rhinos whose feet are healthy and resemble in structures those of wild animals.

All the above-mentioned aspects are recommendations. They base on histological and comparative anatomical results of 32 captive and 10 wild animals.

Ethological contribution to the introduction of two new individuals (1.1) in a group of White Rhinoceroses (*Ceratotherium simum simum*) (1.2) in the Réserve Africaine de Sigean (France).

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The Réserve Africaine de Sigean is located in south of France. It is an extensive game park for wild animals : more than 3000 animals inhabit about 260 hectares of garrigue.

In accordance with EEP's advice, which "encourages to re-socialize White Rhinoceroses in order to stimulate breeding", two new individuals (1.1) arrived at the Réserve Africaine de Sigean the 27th of last March. The study consisted of introducing the two new individuals (2 years old) to the elder group (1.2) (all of them are more than 12).

The two groups were in distinct enclosures. Three periods of observation of about one month had been distinguished : all three permitted auditory, olfactory, visual and tactile contacts through bars all day long. Every day of the second period, bars between the two enclosures were opened for about one hour per day. The situation was nearly the same in the third period, but adults were not present in their enclosure.

Both of the two adult females didn't seem interested in the new individuals unlike the adult male, who was very aggressive when the young rhinoceroses were in his enclosure (it charged them systematically) in the second period. This aggressiveness decreased at the time of interactions through bars, and non agonistic behaviours could be observed. The hypothesis of two distinctive territories (the two enclosures) is the most suitable. It is supported by the high number of the adult male's urine-marks close to the bars, and by the young Rhinoceroses' submissive behaviour. Both of them ran away from the male when they were in his enclosure, but they had tactile contacts through bars with him.

The male turned its aggressiveness particularly to the young male. How-

ever the younger is not a potential opponent because of its height, its age and its cut horn (for transport). This aggressiveness bridled the introduction, so we decided to take several steps in the third period. In the adults' enclosure without them, progress was successful : the two young Rhinoceroses had a behavioural catalogue which was increasingly diverse. As regards reproductive behaviours of the adult male, the rise was very significant in comparison with last year at the same period. Results of the analyses of the female faecal samples are not yet known. However the two adult females behaved in a new way, which may be considered as an indication of cycling. So the presence of the two new individuals in an enclosure close by the adults' one could be a solution. Another solving could be the alternate presence of the three females with either the adult male or the young male.