

WAY KAMBAS SUMATRAN RHINO SANCTUARY

As a consequence of the failure of current, conventional captive program for Sumatran rhino, there have been strong suggestions to establish a managed breeding center in native habitat (a "sanctuary"), inside or nearby a major protected area, to provide much larger areas and more natural conditions that hopefully will induce Sumatran rhino to reproduce. Such a rhino sanctuary can also serve as a base of operations for more intensive protection of rhino that inhabit the larger protected area around the sanctuary. Finally, the rhino in the breeding enclosures can be a tourist attraction that can contribute to financial self-sufficiency of the sanctuary and rhino conservation programs in general.

The Indonesian Rhino Strategy, the Government of Indonesia has for some time been proposing to establish sanctuaries for Sumatran rhino. These sanctuaries would be contained but very large and entirely natural areas in native habitat where rhino could be intensely protected and their breeding still be under management.

There was much further development of this rhino sanctuary concept at the Population and Habitat Viability Analysis (PHVA) Workshop conducted in Bandar Lampung in November 1993, although the terminology used at that time was an *in situ* intensive management center ISIMC. The major results and recommendations that emerged from the PHVA to guide further development of a Sumatran rhino managed breeding center in native habitat included:

- (1) Support for the center should be sought from national and international, governmental and non-governmental agencies;
- (2) The center should be located within or adjacent to a major conservation area for Sumatran rhino to encourage and support better wildlife management in the conservation area.
- (3) Rhinos for the center should be derived both from animals already in captivity as well as rhinos rescued from the wild as determined and recommended by PHPA.
- (4) The center should have an eco-tourism component to provide on-going operational support.

In August 1994, a further workshop was conducted, this time at Taman Safari Indonesia to organize an attempt to develop a managed breeding center in native habitat that could and would evolve into a Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary (SRS). The intent is to move in the direction of the sanctuary system that has proved so effective for

rhino conservation in African countries, although the forest habitat of the Sumatran rhino will require adaptive re-interpretation of this concept.

The recommendations of this workshop are:

- (1) the first Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary be located in Way Kambas National Park.
- (2) the protocol for rhino management and the design of enclosures must maximize natural conditions;
- (3) The Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary Program will consist of both:
 - (A) an Animal Programs and
 - (B) a Conservation Tourism Program to provide financial self-sustainability for the program
- (4) The Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary Program should be managed by private companies which receive concessions from and ultimately report to PHPA. To this end, a new Managing Company will be formed through a partnership between Yayasan Mitra Rhino (YMR) and the International Rhino Foundation (IRF) under auspices of PHPA. Other major "investors" in the program (i.e. parties providing money, rhino, etc.) will be receive shares in the company and be represented on the Board.
- (5) An Operating Company with experience and expertise in both animal management and tourism development will be contracted by the Management Company to operate the Sanctuary
- (6) It is estimated that the start-up costs for the Sanctuary will be ~ U.S. \$ 1 million: half for the biological program; the other half for the tourism program. An additional one-half million is anticipated in operating expenses for the first 3 years until the tourism program is capable of generating the self-supporting income.
- (6) The funding strategy will consist of both a short-term and a long-term plan:
 - (A) Short-term: The initial funding during the first 3 years for the Sanctuary would be provided by national and international contributors to be known as "investors".
 - (a) The IRF will lead the effort to recruit about \$ 500,000 outside Indonesia and will provide a substantial initial contribution as a challenge for other matching donations.
 - (b) YMR will lead this fund-raising campaign in Indonesia.
 - (B) Long-term: A conservation tourism program will be developed with the objective and expectation that it will provide financial self-sufficiency and sustainability for the entire program by within 3-4 years.

A unique feature of the new strategy is that it incorporates a conservation tourism component designed to fund the continuing Sumatran rhino conservation efforts necessary to preserve this Indonesian national treasure. The plans call for facilities oriented to both day visitors and a range of overnight programs designed for every budget. This facility will provide the only opportunity in the world to view the Sumatran rhino, the Sumatran elephant and the Sumatran tiger all in a natural setting. These programs will help to educate the public to the plight of this magnificent species and promote public support for its continued conservation.

The plans call for funding the program entirely from monies raised in the private sector both in Indonesia and abroad.

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INDIA AND U.S. RHINO EXCHANGE

The Indian Endangered Species Breeding Program (IESBP) and the North American AZA Species Survival Plan (SSP) program are in the process of exchanging specimens of Indian rhino to genetically and demographically enhance their respective populations. There is currently a dearth of females in Indian zoos. The North American population is in need of further founder stock for genetic viability. Hence the SSP will provide a female for the IESBP. In exchange, the IESBP will provide a male for the SSP.