

FUND-RAISING EFFORTS

GEF PROJECT FOR S.E. ASIA RHINOS

After two years, the approval process has finally been completed for a Global Environment Facility (G.E.F.) Biodiversity Project to assist initiation of full implementation of rhino conservation strategies and action plans in Indonesia and Malaysia. The Project will provide US \$ 2 Million over three years, evenly divided between the two countries.

This Project was initiated at the first of the two UNEP Conferences Among Range States, Consumer States, and Donors in 1992 and 1993. UNDP is administering this Project for the GEF. The Project will be nationally executed and implemented with the AsRSG providing technical coordination and facilitation. It is believed that this is the first GEF Biodiversity Project with species conservation as the focus, although the rhinos will serve as umbrella and flagship species for conservation of the ecosystems they inhabit.

The Project recognizes that there is an emergency for the rhinos in Indonesia and Malaysia which could well be extinct in 3-5 years without the kind of intervention the GEF Project will provide. Full implementation of the rhino conservation strategies and action plans in both Indonesia and Malaysia will require many more funds than the \$ 2 Million being provided by this GEF Project. However, the GEF funds are intended to catalyze and attract other financial support.

The project has 3 major elements, each to be

- Poacher activity will be reduced to the point of elimination within the areas covered by the units as measured by numbers of traps and poachers detected by patrols and the numbers of rhino lost as revealed by improved surveillance.
 - A number of rhino, particularly in Malaysia, will be translocated from isolated situations into the intensive protection zones represented by operational areas of the rhino protection units.
 - Monitoring of these rhino by radio telemetry will provide improved information on rhino status and biology needed for the programmes.
 - 350 Sumatran rhino (75% global population) and their ecosystems will be preserved.
 - A model will be provided for other range states.
- (2) *Develop more involvement by, as well as benefits and incentives for, local human communities in rhino conservation:*
- Persons from the local communities will be employed in the rhino protection units;
 - Income generating activities (e.g. eco-tourism) will be delineated and initiated; local communities will develop appreciation of and pride in the rhino, its ecosystem, and their conservation;
 - In conjunction with the World Bank WWF Kerinci Seblat programme and possibly other projects to be proposed, baseline data needed to develop an effective community involvement programme will be collected.
- (3) *Formulate, catalyze, and initiate a comprehensive*

UNEP RHINO CONSERVATION CONFERENCE AND FACILITY

A new Elephant and Rhinoceros Conservation Facility has been established at UNEP Headquarters in Nairobi as recommended by the UNEP Rhino Conference in 1993. The Acting Coordinator is Mr. Oluwafemi Owolabi. In October 1994, there was a meeting at UNEP of the representatives of the new Facility with the Chairs of the four IUCN SSC African and Asian Elephant and Rhino Groups to formulate relative roles and responsibilities. UNEP has not yet issued the formal report of this meeting. However, there were a number of points of agreement. In terms of relative roles and responsibilities, it was agreed that the Facility would concentrate on recruiting financial and political support for conservation programs while the Specialist Groups would continue to provide technical, scientific and information assistance and advice. The meeting proposed establishment of an Advisory Committee for the Facility to consist of: the Chairs of the four Specialist Groups; representatives of UNEP, IUCN, and CITES; a fund-raising specialist; and other resource persons who may be recruited for specific issues or meetings. It was recommended at the meeting that the Facility attempt to provide each of the Specialist Groups with some operational funds to support these technical activities. There are tentative plans for a meeting of the Facility and this Advisory Group in the first half of 1995.

U.S. RHINO AND TIGER ACT

The United States of America has just approved legislation to create a Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Act, whose purposes are:

- (1) To assist the conservation of rhinos and tigers by supporting conservation programs of nations, and the CITES Secretariat, whose activities directly or indirectly affect rhino and tiger populations,
- (2) To provide funds for those programs.

Under this Act, up to U.S. \$ 10,000,000/year for the next 5 U.S. Fiscal Years (1996-2000) will be provided for projects that are approved by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior. Projects may include all activities associated with scientific resource management, such as research, census, law enforcement, habitat protection, acquisition, and management, propagation, live trapping, and transportation. Proposals may be

submitted by countries, the CITES Secretariat, or other parties involved in rhinoceros and/or tiger. Each proposal shall:

- (1) name the individual responsible for conducting the project
- (2) state the purposes of the project succinctly
- (3) describe the qualifications of the individuals who will conduct the project
- (4) estimate the funds and time required to complete the project
- (5) provide evidence of support of the project by appropriate governmental entities of countries in which the project will be conducted, if the Secretary determines that support is needed for success of the project;
- (6) provide any other information the Secretary of the Interior considers necessary for evaluating eligibility of the project for funding.

Projects may be approved if they enhance conservation programs for conservation of rhinos or tigers by assisting efforts to:

- (1) implement conservation programs
- (2) enhance compliance with provisions of CITES and laws of the United States or other country that prohibit or regulate the taking or trade of rhinoceros or tigers or the use of rhinoceros or tiger habitat.
- (3) develop sound scientific information on that species' habitat condition and carrying capacity, total numbers, and population trends, or annual reproduction and mortality.

The Act states that to the maximum extent possible, priority will be accorded to projects which will enhance sustainable development programs to ensure effective, long-term conservation of rhinoceros and tigers.

Editor's Note: Naturally, in Asia, rhinoceros and tigers inhabit many of the same areas. Although the Act does not so state, it seems logical that projects for both rhinos and tigers will have an advantage in the consideration process. The AsRSG will work closely with tiger conservationists in this regards.

The Administrator of the Agency for U.S. AID will be consulted on all projects. A decision on each project will be provided no later than 6 months after submission.

Countries or persons interested in pursuing support from this Act may contact the U.S. Secretary of the Interior in Washington, D.C. or the AsRSG Program Officers who will be available to facilitate applications.

EUROPEAN UNION

At the UNEP Rhino Conference in 1993, representative of the European Union had indicated they would consider providing funds approximating 450,000 ecus (US \$ 600,000) to Asian rhino conservation.

Based subsequent discussions with the E.U., the AsRSG is now submitting proposals for support in 3 areas:

- (1) Core support for the AsRSG.
(The EU is already providing support for the AsRSG)
- (2) Contribution to the funding package needed for start-up costs of the Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary in Way Kambas.
- (3) Infrastructure support for Indian rhino in Assam.

TAIWAN GOVERNMENT

The AsRSG Program Office has also been exploring the possibility of major support from the Government of Taiwan for Asian Rhino conservation efforts.

WORKSHOPS AND REPORTS

SUMATRAN RHINO

A Population and Habitat Viability Analysis Workshop was conducted on Sumatran Rhino in Indonesia in November 1993. The Workshop was a joint endeavor of PHPA and the IUCN SSC through its Conservation Breeding Specialist Group (CBSG) and the AsRSG. Dr. Ronald Tilson and Dr. Ulysses Seal assisted Drs. Widada, Ramono, in facilitating the workshop.

INDIAN RHINO

A PHVA Workshop on Indian Rhinos was conducted in Jaldapara Sanctuary December 1993. The workshop was a collaborative endeavor of the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India; the Wildlife Departments of West Bengal and Assam; Zoo Outreach Organization-CBSG India; the IUCN-SSC CBSG and AsRSG. G. J. M. Smith, J. C. M. Smith, and G. J. M. Smith were the main facilitators.