

Pull your horns in

THE EEP OF THE BEAUTIFUL, CHARISMATIC INDIAN OR GREATER ONE-HORNED RHINOCEROS IS LOOKING FOR NEW HOLDERS

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The Indian rhino (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) is one of the three rhinoceros species kept in EAZA zoos. In the wild, their populations in India and Nepal number slightly more than 3,000 individuals and are severely threatened by poaching and habitat loss.

The total captive population was 189 Indian rhinos on 1 January 2012. The EEP population has been growing steadily and included 62 individuals as of 1 January 2013. To maintain the growth of this small EEP and ensure a healthy and thriving captive population, new holders are urgently needed. Although the interest in this species has always been high among EAZA zoos, several zoos have been unable to build their exhibits for

financial and other reasons. As a result, we are always looking for new homes for the births and if you would like to keep this unique species, we would love to hear from you.

Indian rhinos live in the riverine grasslands of the Terai and Brahmaputra basins. In captivity, they need heated indoor housing, pools inside and outside as well as a mud wallow, and soft substrates in the indoor and outdoor exhibits. Males and females need to be kept separated.

Indian rhinos are a great attraction in every zoo. Young calves are usually the favorites of the visitors and enchant the public, especially when they play with each other and their mothers.

In recent years, the poaching of rhinos for their horn has increased drastically. It is thus more important than ever that a healthy, growing *ex situ* population is kept in zoos and that the public is made aware of the threats that loom over the rhinos and what zoos do to help these wonderful animals in the wild. Conservation projects for this species exist in India and Nepal and are in urgent need of support. Indian rhinos are thus perfect for illustrating the important role that zoos and EEPs play in the protection of species.

If you are interested in keeping this charismatic species, please contact Beatrice Steck at steck@zoobasel.ch.