

AN HEIR AND A SPARE?

We are proud to announce that not-so-little Andatu (now weighing ~530 kg) is going to be a big brother! In January, male Andalas successfully mated with female Ratu, and, in May, we expect to have a second baby rhino at the Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary (SRS).

Susie Ellis, PhD | Executive Director, International Rhino Foundation

This birth represents a continuation of the international love story between Cincinnati Zoo-born Andalas, who was moved to the SRS from the United States in 2007, and Ratu, who wandered out of the Indonesian rainforest in 2005 and joined the SRS population in 2006.

Their male calf, Andatu, was born at the SRS in June 2012 – the first rhino born in a managed breeding facility in Asia in more than 140 years. The gender of the new calf is not yet known. Other big news is that Andalas' 'teenage' brother Harapan, born in 2006, will soon leave Cincinnati to live at the SRS. Cincinnati Zoo-born brothers Andalas and Harapan are the only remaining descendants of their

parents, both deceased. Harapan has been living the bachelor life for quite some time; experts agree that he will be better off living with others of his kind at the SRS. We are hopeful that Harapan will have the opportunity to learn to breed, and hopefully sire his own offspring in the near future.

The Sumatran rhino is one of the most threatened mammals on the planet, and while one birth won't save the species, it's a step in the right direction. Sumatran rhinos now number fewer than 100, living in three populations in Indonesia, Bukit Barisan Selatan, Way Kambas, and Gunung Leuser National Parks. These populations are further divided into at least 10 fragmented groups, numbering anywhere from two to 35 individuals. The species has been declared extinct in Malaysia, where wild population numbers plummeted from 60–80 animals to zero over the past 10 years due to poaching and small population issues such as the Allee effect.

This past year, funded by the Disney Conservation Fund, the International Rhino Foundation and partners convened a series of strategic planning workshops in Indonesia, bringing together some of the best rhino experts from

around the globe to plot out a species recovery strategy for the next 10 years. Among others, key actions to save the Sumatran rhinos are:

- Intensify protection in the National Parks
- Create Intensive ('no-go') Protection Zones within the Parks
- Expand the SRS so that it can accommodate more animals and produce more calves
- Consolidate straggler animals either into the Intensive Protection Zones or, if examination shows that an animal (particularly females) has good reproductive potential, move them to the SRS
- Carry out extensive awareness campaigns targeting multiple audiences to call attention to the plight of the Sumatran rhino

While these recommendations are being implemented, Rhino Protection Units (RPU) remain the backbone of protection for the species. The 13, IRF-funded RPUs protecting Sumatran rhinos in Bukit Barisan Selatan and Way Kambas National Parks routinely encounter illegal hunting, logging and fishing activities. Other illegal activities detected include live-trapping of birds for the pet trade; livestock grazing and the planting of agricultural crops; the collection of non-timber forest products, and setting fires to generate fresh vegetation and attract game species.

In Way Kambas National Park, in addition to land patrols, thanks to Save the Rhino's donation of a new live-aboard guard post, the Unicorn II, the teams are now able to patrol the rivers – an entry point for many illegal activities. We are deeply grateful for Save the Rhino's ongoing support of these programmes, which are now, and will remain, the front line of protection for this critically endangered rhino species.

Grants

Since October 2014, Save the Rhino has sent a total of £3,958 for Sumatran rhino conservation efforts, including €5,000 from Wilhelma Zoo Stuttgart.



Above: Rhino Protection Units in the field, including river patrols on the live-aboard Unicorn II

