



TAG reports 2013-14

EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF ZOOS AND AQUARIA

TAG surveys

No EAZA Equid TAG survey has been conducted during the reporting period.

Regional Collection Plan

The TAG is aware that the current RCP is in urgent need of updating. For now the review of the Best Practice Guidelines has been prioritised, with the aim to address the RCP shortly after.

The current RCP is a comprehensive 64-pages regional collection plan, completed in 2003, and distributed in CD-format to all EAZA members. The RCP is also available in pdf-format on the EAZA website.

Current EEPs:

Grevy's zebra (*Equus grevyi*)
 Hartmann's mountain zebra (*Equus zebra hartmannae*)
 Somali wild ass (*Equus africanus somalicus*)
 Kulan (*Equus hemionus kulan*)
 Onager (*Equus hemionus onager*)
 Przewalski's horse (*Equus ferus przewalskii*)

Monitoring studbooks:

Maneless zebra (*Equus burchelli borensis*)

RHINO

TAG Chair: Friederike von Houwald (Zoo Basel, Basel, Switzerland)

TAG Vice Chair: ars Versteeg (Safaripark Beekse Bergen, Hilvarenbeek, The Netherlands)

The vision and mission of the EAZA Rhinoceros TAG are to have a healthy, viable population of free ranging and intensively managed rhinos ranging through intact ecosystems, where they are valued and cherished both locally and globally, and to ensure all populations in human care are healthy, self-sustaining and genetically viable and are capable of being an effective tool in support of rhino conservation in the wild.

TAG meetings 2013-2014

In 2013, the EAZA Rhinoceros TAG met at the annual EAZA conference in Edinburgh. A major aim is to continue to strengthen forces with the *in situ* partners to tackle the huge

poaching problems throughout the year. For the TAG meeting in Edinburgh, the Executive director of SRI, Cathy Dean and Richard Bonham, Executive Director of Big Life Foundation were invited. Unfortunately, Richard was unable to attend the meeting and therefore Cathy Dean was so kind to report on behalf of Richard on the poaching crisis in Kenya and how they tackle the huge task to protect the last free roaming Black rhino population in the Chyulu Hills, Kenya. Cathy then talked on behalf of Save the Rhino International and presented an update on the poaching crises (over 1000 rhinos were poached in Africa in 2013) and the most relevant questions (trade yes/no; protection measures; results of meetings in Asia).

In 2014, the EAZA Rhino TAG met at the annual EAZA conference in Budapest. Invited guest speakers were Dirk Swart, Section Ranger for Rhino Conservation in Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park, South Africa, who reported about the high poaching incidents in SA (1215 rhinos poached in Africa) and how they tackle this issue. The second invited Guest speaker was Hermann Poort from Nino the mad mad rhino. He presented a possibility how zoos can engage their visitors in rhino conservation.

Due to the high poaching numbers of rhinos, the Rhino TAG urges all rhino holders to support rhino conservation projects. Further information can be downloaded at the EAZA Rhino TAG webpage.

Update on breeding programmes 2013-2014

The status of the 3 EEPs within the rhinoceros TAG for 2013 are as follows:

Black rhino EEP (*Diceros bicornis michaeli*): (Becca Biddle, Chester Zoo)

- At the end of 2013 there were 22.45 (67) Black rhino held within 17 EAZA institutions.
- That includes a pair (1.1) of *Diceros bicornis minor* held at Frankfurt zoo. In 2013 there was a plan to transfer these rhinos to Swaziland, but unfortunately this plan fell through. An alternative for these two rhinos has not yet been decided upon yet. Both animals have an estimated birth date of July 1986 so are coming up to 28 years of age.
- There are a further two collections in Europe holding *Diceros bicornis michaeli* that we know of (Dvur Kralove and Zoo d'Arcachon).
- During 2013 there were 1.3 births (1.1 Chester, 0.1 Leipzig, 0.1 Krefeld). This continues the trend of a sex ratio skew with over two females per male in the population.
- There was 0.1 death of an old (30 year) female at Port



2014 BLACK RHINO HUSBANDRY WORKSHOP © E BELTOFT

Lympne.

- Tallinn Zoo was welcomed back into the EEP receiving a new young breeding pair of Black rhinos at the beginning of 2013. New to the EEP is Rotterdam who also received a pair of Black rhinos during 2013.
- There were a total of 5.4 transfers over the year.

Indian rhino EEP (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) (Beatrice Steck/Olivier Pagan, Zoo Basel)

- The EEP included 31.34 animals (65) held in 24 zoos as of 31 December 2013.
- Births: 1,3 (1,0 in Basel and 0,1 in Beauval, Chester and Lisieux)
- Deaths: 0,1 (Lisbon lost the old cow aged 33 years, originally from Dvur Kralove)
- Transfers: 0.2: (Beauval received a female from Basel and Bewdley a female from Amersfoort)

At least 6 zoos participate in Indian rhino conservation projects, more zoos are assumed to support SRI and International Rhino Foundation (IRF).

The Indian rhino EEP held their annual meeting during the EAZA conference in Edinburgh with a focus on a research project on skin problems and studbook data in support of

extending interbirth intervals. The EEP population grew from 62 to 65 individuals and females in Chester and Beauval had their first births. The four potential founders have still not reproduced successfully.

The import of the female from San Diego WAP has been taken up again by Lisieux after it became possible again to import rhinos from third countries. The Indian rhino EEP is looking for new holders that provide good exhibit plans and reliably build their exhibits within 2-3 years after contacting the coordinator.

White rhino EEP (*Ceratotherium simum*) (Lars Versteeg, Beekse Bergen)

- The white rhino EEP population started with 260 (101.159) animals in 71 zoos.
- Births: 4.4 of which 3.4 survived.
- Deaths: 1.3 + 1.0 calve that did not survive. Majority are old animals with the exception of 1 female that died because of veterinary complications.
- Transfers: 3.5
- Imports: None
- 14 zoos are reported to participate in White rhino conservation projects, but it is known more zoos donate



BLACK RHINO CALF, ZOO ZURICH

money to the large Rhino conservation organisations SRI and IRE.

The white rhino EEP had their annual meeting during the EAZA conference of which the focus was upon veterinary issues and conservation. Both subjects are playing a crucial role in this EEP. The population in the EEP is slowly growing. More calves are born, and more important, more females start reproducing. The EEP feels that with the initiative to exchange animals which are not breeding and by exchanging young females out of their maternal herd a big step has been taken to increase the population growth. Only because the large percentage of old “import” animals from the 1970’s are now slowly dying out, the population is not yet sustainable, but with the potential and the development it seems this will only be a matter of time! The EEP population grew up to 262 animals (102.160) during 2013. And even more exciting, eleven animals have been reported to give birth in 2014!

The status of the 3 EEPs within the rhinoceros TAG for 2014 are as follows:

Black rhino EEP (*Diceros bicornis michaeli*): (Becca Biddle, Chester Zoo)

- At the end of 2014 there were 25.45 (70) Black rhino held within 18 EAZA institutions.
- That includes a pair (1.1) of *Diceros bicornis minor* held at Frankfurt zoo.
- During 2014 there were 3.1 births (2.0 Berlin, 1.0 Leipzig, 0.1 Zurich).
- There was 1.1 death of an old (44 year) female at Port Lympne and a 13 day old male calf at Leipzig.
- There were a total of 3.2 transfers over the year.

TAPIR AND HIPPO

TAG Chair: Bengt Holst (Copenhagen Zoo, Copenhagen, Denmark)

General activities 2013/2014

The Tapir and Hippo TAG met twice during the report period, on 25 September 2013 in Edinburgh and 25 September 2014 in Budapest. The main topics discussed during the two meetings were the conservation status of the breeding programme species (Lowland Tapir, Malay Tapir, Common Hippo and Pygmy Hippo) and the news about a possible fifth species of tapir found in the Amazon. The “new species”, so far called *Tapirus kabomani*, could differ from the other New world species of tapirs by anatomical characters, ecology and also genetically, but the validity of this taxon is still open for discussion.

As usual the IUCN SSC Tapir Specialist Group (TSG) updated the TAG about their work and in particular about the VI International Tapir Symposium that was to take place in Brazil in November 2014. The Tapir and Hippo TAG has a very close link to the TSG and is a partner in the preparation of the Tapir Symposium. During the symposium the situation with the possible new tapir species was discussed, and it was decided to gather more data, especially genetic data, about the “species” before making a decision as to whether or not to approve it as a new species. A new time frame of one year was given for the collation of such data after which a decision will be made. The outcome of this work will be reported at the next meeting of the TAG (Wroclaw, September 2015), and any potential consequences for the management of the Tapir programmes will then be discussed further.

At the meeting in September 2014 it was decided to merge the Tapir and Hippo TAG with the Pigs and Peccary TAG, forming a new joint TAG called the Tapir and Suiform TAG. The merge was originally proposed by the former Chairman of the Pigs and Peccary Tag when he stepped down as Chairman, and it was approved by the EEP Committee in fall 2014. It makes good sense since the taxa of the two TAGs are covering the same geographical area, and the species are faced with the same overall challenges. The organization of the new joint TAG will be described in more detail in the 2015 TAG report.

As part of the second round of programme evaluations the Malay Tapir EEP was scheduled for 2014. Evaluation forms were circulated to all relevant parties in November 2014 and will be collated and analysed in 2015. Furthermore the Tapir and Hippo TAG was evaluated in fall 2013, and the