



# TAG REPORTS 2016

EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF ZOOS AND AQUARIA



species there.

The Przewalski's horse EEP and Prague Zoo continue with their work of reintroductions of the species into western Mongolia which is supported by EEP institutions financially and in kind. The Somali wild ass EEP is cooperating with conservation in the field in Ethiopia and Eritrea.

## RHINO

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

**TAG Vice-Chair: Lars Versteeg (Safaripark Beekse Bergen, Hilvarenbeek, Netherlands)**

The vision and mission of the EAZA Rhinoceros TAG is 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 *ex situ* populations are healthy, self-sustaining and genetically viable and are capable of being an effective tool in support of rhino conservation in the wild.

In 2016, the EAZA Rhinoceros TAG met at the EAZA Annual Conference in Belfast. A major aim is to continue to strengthen forces with the *in situ* partners to tackle the huge poaching problems. For the Rhino TAG meeting in Belfast, Natasha Anderson, Monitoring Coordinator of the Lowveld Rhino Trust in Zimbabwe, was our conservation guest speaker and talked about Rhino Conservation in Zimbabwe.

Dr. Marcus Clauss, the Rhino TAG Nutrition Advisor, gave a very detailed talk about rhino nutrition with an emphasis on dos and don'ts.

A further highlight was the talk of Josephine Gibson, Partnership Development Manager of Save the Rhino International (SRI), who is helping Cathy Dean, Executive director of SRI, the appointed Rhino TAG Conservation Advisor, to link zoos with rhino conservation. She showed examples of how zoos already support rhino field projects and highlighted the fantastic support of many zoos for rhino conservation.

According to the latest news from the IUCN African Rhino Specialist Group (AfrSG), the number of African rhinos killed by poachers has stagnated for the first time and gives hope that all the hard work on the ground, often supported by zoos and other NGOs, is truly making a difference.

The continued poaching has impacted on rhino population numbers. According to the IUCN AfrSG, numbers of the more numerous white rhino (*Ceratotherium simum*) appear to have

levelled off on the continent with 2015 population numbers estimated between 19,682 and 21,077. The black rhino (*Diceros bicornis*) numbers for 2015 are estimated at between 5,042 and 5,455. Despite the fact that the latter species shows a +2.9% per annum increase, poaching has however reduced growth in black rhino numbers below the usual +5% per annum target growth rate. The same applies to the white rhino population.

Many EAZA rhino holding facilities already support rhino conservation projects. This is highly appreciated and needed by the people who are working in the field and whose commitment – often at tremendous costs to themselves and their families – is 100% for rhino protection. It would make an even bigger difference if more rhino holding zoos would contribute to rhino conservation projects. More information can be found at the EAZA Rhino TAG workspace.

The status of the three EEPs within the rhinoceros TAG are as follows:

### **Black rhino EEP (*Diceros bicornis michaeli*):**

In 2016 there were:

- 30.52 (82) and 33.49 (82) Black rhinos (*Diceros bicornis michaeli* and *minor*) held within 21 EAZA institutions. Of those mentioned, only one pair (1.1) of *Diceros bicornis minor* is kept at an EAZA Member.
- Birth: 4.2.
- Deaths: 1.3
- Transfers: 5.4
- Two new institutional holders are now participating in the EEP

The first analysis of the international studbook was performed.

### **Indian rhino EEP (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) (also known as greater one-horned rhino):**

- 37.35 (72) Indian rhinos are kept in 27 EAZA zoos at the end of 2016.
- Births: 2.1 occurred in 2016.
- Deaths: 1.0. The bull in Amersfoort died of a still unknown reason. Amersfoort thus no longer keeps greater one-horned rhinos.
- Transfers 2.5
- 6 out of 27 zoos (known to the EEP) participate in Indian Rhino conservation projects (Amersfoort, Basel, Chester, Lisieux, Stuttgart, Whippsnade)

The Indian rhino EEP population size is increasing, but it is becoming more and more difficult to find institutional holders, who not only send appropriate plans in time, but also build the facilities in time.



YOUNG BLACK RHINO (*DICEROS BICORNIS MICHAELI*) AT CHESTER ZOO © CHESTER ZOO

It is vital for the Indian rhino EEP to find new holders that reliably build their exhibits within two to three years of contacting the EEP.

#### **White rhino EEP (*Ceratotherium simum*)**

- The white rhino EEP population started with 118.174 (292) animals in 78 zoos.
- Births: 12.10, of which 9.8 survived.
- Deaths: 2.5 adults + 3.2 calves that did not survive. Not all adults' deaths were old animals. There have been several cases of veterinary difficulties resulting in death of breeding animals.
- Transfers: 7.8
- Imports: None
- 30 zoos are reported to participate in white rhino conservation projects, but more zoos donate money to the

larger rhino conservation organisations, such as SRI and International Rhino Foundation (IRF).

The White rhino EEP had their annual meeting during the EAZA Annual Conference, with a focus on veterinary issues, conservation and building up a sustainable population.

The initiatives of the EEP, regarding the historical lack of breeding in this species, are now showing results with more and more animals breeding. With the number of births rising, the population has become sustainable. But with the increase in the number of calves, the importance of additional separation/holding facilities for animals which cannot be held in the group any longer is also increasing. Especially older males, no longer needed for breeding, can be a potential future problem. Holders are encouraged to be creative and possibly house surplus rhino(s) in other hoofstock paddocks since they are easy to mix with other species.

Because of the need for additional holders for the Black rhino and Indian rhino EEPs, potential new rhino holders will initially be guided to these two EEPs.

## **TAPIR AND SUIFORM**

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

**TAG Vice-Chair: Jochen Reiter (Aquazoo Düsseldorf, Düsseldorf, Germany)**

#### **General activities:**

The Tapir and Suiform TAG met once during the report period, on 22 September 2016 in Belfast, Northern Ireland. The meeting was mostly a reporting meeting highlighting a selection of the research and conservation activities that took place.

During the reporting period, Will Walker (Wild Place Project, UK) took over the Red river hog EEP from Jochen Reiter after Jochen left Duisburg Zoo, Germany. Furthermore, Lidia Przybylska was reappointed as coordinator of the Visayan warty pig EEP after having changed institutions to Wrocław Zoo, Poland.

#### **Conservation activities:**

From 25-30 January, three two-day masterplanning workshops were held in Bogor (Indonesia) for the Global Species Management Plans (GSMPs) for Banteng, Anoa and Babirusa. At the meeting, the participants jointly determined if and which role the global *ex situ* population would play in the conservation of the taxon (in this case for babirusa) and thus what the genetic