



Rallying support for rhinos

HOW EAZA MEMBERS HAVE MADE A SUBSTANTIAL DIFFERENCE TO SAVE THE RHINO'S GLOBAL CONSERVATION WORK

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Rhinos in zoos play a very important role as ambassadors, raising awareness about the threats facing all five species and raising funds for vital conservation efforts for their wild cousins. In 2019, rhino conservation received the most taxa-specific support, according to the EAZA Conservation Database. In this same year, EAZA Members partnered with Save the Rhino International specifically to raise an incredible €205,000.

The rhino is undoubtedly one of the most iconic animals on our planet. Seeing these charismatic creatures in the wild is at the top of safari-goers' wish lists, and, closer to home, they are a huge draw for visitors to zoos.

When it comes to the conservation of endangered species, zoos play an incredibly powerful role, both in *ex situ* settings and for *in situ* populations. With Members in the EAZA network welcoming 140 million visitors a year, zoos and aquariums have a prominent platform from which to share conservation messages with the public and, through close encounters with wildlife, to inspire visitors to become active supporters of conservation efforts.

Save the Rhino International and EAZA have had a long and successful

collaboration since the 2005–2006 'Save the Rhinos' campaign, which raised more than €660,000 for projects ranging from South Africa to Indonesia. Ever since, we have worked closely with many EAZA Members to continue delivering crucial rhino conservation activities across Africa and Asia.

In our new report, *Zoos and Save the Rhino International: Working together to save rhinos*, we share the fantastic news that our zoo partners across Europe raised a phenomenal €205,000 for conservation programmes between April 2019 and March 2020. Almost doubling the contributions received in the previous year, this incredible outcome shows that zoos are rising to the challenge of increasing their contribution to, and impact on, saving species in the wild.

This amazing sum has supported a diverse range of conservation work, from rhino protection and law-enforcement efforts to reducing the demand for illegal rhino horn. On the opposite page are just some of the ways in which EAZA Members have made a difference for rhinos in the wild in the last year, from strengthening canine units to closing down illegal markets.

In total, thanks to our partnerships with 34 EAZA Members, we directed grants to eight programmes working to conserve rhinos in seven countries across Africa and Asia. These funds have made a massive difference to our programme partners, and, through our long-term partnerships with zoos, we are helping to provide a reliable source of funding to ensure programmes can continue their rhino conservation efforts. While the Covid-19 pandemic has greatly affected our zoo and programme partners alike, we look forward to continuing our successful partnerships as we emerge from lockdown to maintain our crucial support for the world's rhinos, when they need it more than ever.

Finally, we would like to say a massive thank you to all EAZA Members, their staff, boards and visitors, who have so generously contributed to support our rhino conservation efforts. Together we are achieving the vision of all five species of rhino thriving in the wild for future generations.

To find out more about how zoos and Save the Rhino have been saving rhinos in the wild, visit our website at www.savetherhino.org to read the report.

Webinar: Finding a Partner in Conservation

A key part of delivering conservation impact is building strong relationships with trusted partners to achieve positive outcomes for wildlife. Since Save the Rhino was established in 1994, we have gained a wealth of experience in developing successful partnerships with field conservation partners and organisations such as zoos who support their work. With the EAZA Executive Office, Save the Rhino hosted a webinar to share our knowledge and experiences of choosing and working with conservation partners. A recording of this event is available on the EAZA Member Area and the EAZA YouTube channel and will help zoos and aquariums to identify the programmes they want to work with to make a difference for threatened wildlife around the world. Featuring examples from our work with rhinos, the lessons will be applicable to supporting the conservation of all species of wildlife.



Stopping illegal markets in Vietnam

Vietnam is one of the countries with the highest demand for illegal rhino horn. To tackle this pervasive threat, our partners, including Zoo de La Barben (France), have been supporting the work of Education for Nature Vietnam (ENV). ENV educates people about the threat that illegal wildlife trade brings to species such as rhinos in an effort to reduce consumption. Thanks to generous funding from our partners, ENV produces Public Service Announcements (PSAs); videos aiming to change attitudes and behaviours around illegal wildlife products. Their most recent PSA, 'Children know the score on rhino poaching' has been shown on TV channels across Vietnam, and has been viewed more than 1.6 million times on YouTube – a fantastic result, helping to spread the message that using illegal wildlife products is wrong.

Strengthening canine units in Kenya

Keeping rhinos safe from poachers is key to maintaining healthy, thriving populations and reducing the illegal trade in rhino horn. In Kenya, Ol Jogi was one of the first conservancies in the Laikipia region to add a canine unit to its anti-poaching and law enforcement efforts. However, courts often did not recognise the importance or credibility of evidence collected by canine units in criminal cases. Our partners at Zoo Berlin and Tierpark Berlin in Germany provided generous funds to enable Ol Jogi's Canine Unit to undergo certification by the Kenya Police. Now successfully certified, evidence collected by the Conservancy's canine team is considered 'admissible' in court cases, an important step to ensuring successful convictions.



Securing a future for the Critically Endangered Sumatran rhino

Alongside protecting rhinos from poaching, managing their populations is important to ensure their future prosperity. In Indonesia, Save the Rhino and our partner Wilhelma Zoological and Botanical Garden (Germany), became Strategic Partners in Sumatran Rhino Rescue – a groundbreaking, international collaboration to save the Critically Endangered Sumatran rhino (*Dicerorhinus sumatrensis*) from extinction through managed conservation breeding and care. Fewer than 80 individuals remain, scattered across 10 small subpopulations; without action, the species could become extinct in a matter of decades.

As part of this exciting project, we're supporting the Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary (SRS) – home to the only viable captive population of Sumatran rhinos in the world. Thanks to crucial funding from Wilhelma Zoo (Germany) and other partners including West Midland Safari Park (UK), a second ring of rhino enclosures was built at the SRS in 2019, along with improvements to its veterinary and staff facilities. This has doubled the space available for rhinos in the breeding programme and increased the capacity of the team to provide the highest standards of care, helping to grow the population of this unique species.



SUMATRAN RHINO CALF © D. CANDRA

Supporting rangers' needs in South Africa

Sometimes, wildlife reserves' greatest needs are not high-tech solutions or large infrastructure projects. At Hluhluwe-Imfolozi Park in South Africa, a number of our zoo partners are supporting rangers to continue tackling the high rate of illegal incursions into the park. Funding from our partners bought 130 extended camping kits for the park's rangers. These kits allow rangers to spend longer periods in the park's 'hotspots' so that they can intercept any incursions before rhinos are poached, increasing the effectiveness of their anti-poaching operations.

