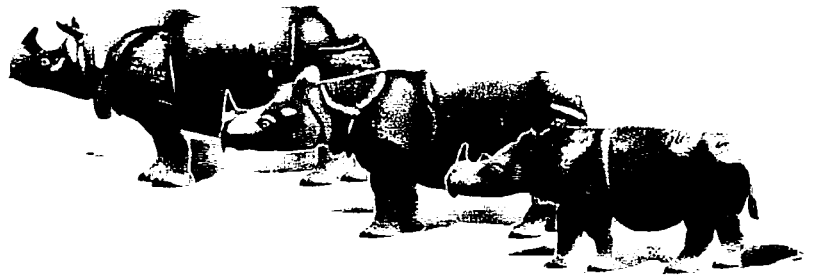


AsRSG



IUCN
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ASIAN RHINOS

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

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The Asian Rhino Specialist Group (AsRSG) has actively continued to play its important role in the conservation of all three Asian rhino species. AsRSG secured \$ 2,000,000 over 3 years from the Global Environment Facility (GEF). These much needed funds have been immediately put into use for projects in Indonesia and Malaysia. Emphasis is on protection (anti-poaching) and outreach programs. Immediate objectives are to mobilize trained and experienced rhino personnel in the field. In Indonesia, a mobile rhino unit has been formed and recruitment and training are in progress for nine Rhino Protection Units. Surveys are being conducted in Malaysia. Vehicles and equipment have been purchased.

The United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) has conducted several meetings with the AsRSG and provided funds for the Group to conduct a meeting and a workshop to analyze and revise the action plan of range states. Accurate funding requirements of range states to implement rhino conservation projects are urgently needed by UNEP to facilitate fund raising.

The signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Government of Indonesia through its Forest Protection and Nature Conservation Agency (PHPA) and the International Rhino Foundation (IRF) is yet another very important achievement in rhino conservation. It paves the way for the establishment of a Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary in the Way Kambas National Park, Sumatra. The Indonesian Ministry of Forestry, the Governor of Lampung Province, the Director General of PHPA and other key personnel are providing strong support for this initiative.

High level meetings have also been conducted with the Secretary General of the Ministry of Science, Technology, and the Environment in Malaysia. In addition to discussion of the GEF project, plans have been explored to provide external funding through the IRF to expand the rhino center at Sungai Dusun.