

AsRSG



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ASIAN RHINOS

Newsletter of the IUCN SSC Asian Rhino Specialist Group
NUMBER 1 January 1995

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

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The Asian Rhino Specialist Group (AsRSG) has been active for the last 10 years with increasing activity during the 1990-1993 IUCN Triennium as the conservation crisis for these species intensifies. The latest estimates of Asian rhino numbers will be a regular feature of the Newsletter. It is unsettling to note that numbers of the Sumatran rhino have now declined to probably fewer than 500, down from 700-1000. The numbers of all three Asian species of rhinos combined is lower than for the rarer of the African rhino species.

Traditionally the AsRSG, like other Specialist Groups, has concentrated on technical information and advice. In the future the AsRSG will assume a more active role in advocacy: program facilitation/coordination; and fund-raising.

To enhance its capabilities, AsRSG is reorganizing for the 1994-1996 Triennium. Mohd Khan continues as Chairman. There will now be two Deputy Chairs: Effendy Sumardja continues for S.E. Asia; Mr. S.C. Dey of India serves to provide more attention to the Indian Subcontinent. For the increased workload, there will also be two Program Officers: Dr. Tom Foose and Dr. Nico van Strien. AsRSG membership has been expanded; a full list appears at the back of the Newsletter.

This Newsletter ASIAN RHINOS will be published twice a year. The Newsletter will contain country reports. There will be an attempt to recruit a correspondent in each range state, but all members of the Group are invited to submit material. Please note that the AsRSG has a new logo and new letterhead.

A new Action Plan will be published in 1995. In conjunction, AsRSG will formulate and activate a strategic funding plan to recruit the estimated US ~ \$ 35,000,000 needed over the next five years and to develop sustainable means to support Asian rhino conservation.

A full meeting of the AsRSG was conducted at Jaldapara, West Bengal, India in December 1993. Full meetings will be conducted every 18-24 months. The next meeting is proposed for December 1995 or January 1996.