

## RHINOCEROS ADVISORY GROUP

Chair:

Robert W. Reece, The Wilds

### Primary Goals

Recognizing that the ultimate objective of captive breeding and related scientific efforts is to preserve wild populations, and that the preservation of wild populations requires the protection and management of habitat and the commitment of people and the governments of the range countries affected, it is the mission of the AAZPA Rhino Advisory Group to: (1) support and/or initiate basic and applied research which contributes to the management and conservation of rhinos, both *in situ* and *ex situ*; (2) strengthen field conservation efforts by developing and exporting useful management technologies; (3) develop, maintain, and use sustainable captive populations of rhinos to insure that animals will be available to augment existing or reestablish extirpated wild populations as needed; (4) promote communication and sharing of information between individuals and organizations working in rhino conservation worldwide; and (5) encourage our member institutions to support *in situ* conservation efforts whenever possible.

Data Table (current through 1 July, 1992)

	One year ago	Current year
# of meetings this year	0	3
# of studbooks under umbrella	4	4
# of SSPs under umbrella	4	4
# of new studbooks petitions submitted	0	0
# of new studbooks approved	0	0
# of new SSP petitions submitted	0	0
# of new SSPs approved	0	0

### Special Concerns

Of particular concern to the Rhino Advisory Group is not only the development of self-sustaining captive populations of the various rhino taxa, but the further development of the technology and methods necessary to make these populations truly useful in supporting *in situ* populations. Much needs to be accomplished to increase our knowledge of the behavioral, nutritional and physiological requirements. Assisted reproduction technology holds great promise in helping to manage both *in situ* and *ex situ* populations and to facilitate the flow of genetic material between small and/or remnant groups.

The communication of information and ideas among the regions and between the *in situ* and *ex situ* communities remains paramount. Discussions have been held to focus on methods which may be useful in facilitating the flow of information. During a recent meeting of the Rhino Advisory Group, members expressed the need for more emphasis on personal approaches instead of waiting for meetings and publications.

Finally, there is a critical need to raise funds to support the efforts being made or which need to be made on behalf of the rhino. Finding solutions to such devastating medical conditions as hemolytic anemia requires that financial resources be identified to support those working on the problems. Nutrition and reproduction studies must be conducted as well as the need for funding *in situ* projects.

### Progress Toward Goals

(1) In it's first year, the Rhino TAG held three meetings. The first general meeting at the San Diego AAZPA annual meeting was intended largely as organizational and provided a forum for identifying the mission and objectives of the TAG and assigning a limited number of tasks. A second meeting of a subcommittee of the entire membership was held in Cincinnati in the Spring of 1992 in order to develop input for the Global Action Plan meetings in London and to begin work on developing management strategies for the regional plan. Finally, another subcommittee met at White Oak Plantation to begin work on a husbandry manual for all of the rhino taxa.

(2) A research committee has been established to identify and prioritize objectives and to develop a plan for their implementation.

(3) Participation with representatives of the other regions in developing a global action plan for rhinos helped to focus the TAG's long term management strategies.

**Short-term Goals for Upcoming Year**

- (1) Develop and promulgate a long range strategy for the region.
- (2) Raise funding to support critical medical research projects.
- (3) Complete a comprehensive husbandry manual.
- (4) Identify and promote research designed to provide information and technology supportive of our conservation management strategies.