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poachers with easy access to hitherto inaccessible places.

Another threat comes from the slash and burn agriculture practiced by almost all of the tribal people resident in the area. The fires set by the farmers could easily spread into the core area of the rhinos especially during the dry season when there is so much combustible plant material around. Shifting cultivation is identified as one of the prime agents of forest destruction.

Much emphasis is placed on inbreeding depression in small populations. While the effects of inbreeding depression are real, they are often transitory in nature. Not all small populations are doomed contrary to what some zoos would like us to believe. The effects of inbreeding depression can be minimized if numbers recover quickly from bottlenecks. The population of about 40 wild cattle at Chillingham in northern England is fit and thriving after 800 years (about 120 generations) of continuous inbreeding, which has included bottlenecks of one female and one male in 1760 following an epidemic, and 8 females and 5 males in 1947 following an arctic winter. Equally striking is the case of the collared lizards of the Ozarks where colonies of about 40 animals have experienced 4,000 years (about 2,000 generations) of inbreeding.

The first priority as far as the conservation of Javan rhinos in Vietnam is concerned is to protect the habitat and eliminate the threat of poaching. It is also proposed to link up the 35,000 ha rhino area with the adjoining 45,000 ha Nam Bai Cat Tien National Park and provide a buffer zone around the rhino area to increase the total area to about 100,000 ha and declare the entire unit as a Man and Biosphere Reserve. More detailed surveys of adjoining areas are planned in an effort to determine the range and number of the Javan rhinos in Vietnam. Stricter penalties need to be meted out to persons killing rhinos or trading in rhino products. The conservation of the Javan rhino, if it is to succeed, should have the support of the local people, especially those who live along the fringes of the rhino habitat whose livelihood depends on the rational use of forest resources.

The Javan rhino in Vietnam is well adapted to respond to a "Sanctuary Strategy". The small population in Lam Dong province can become viable and so must be protected and not abandoned on the hypothesis that genetic degeneration will set in and automatically eliminate them.

RHINO FORENSICS

The National Fish and Wildlife Service's Forensics Laboratory in Ashland, Oregon is working on developing methods to assay various commercial items, such as Chinese medicines, in order to verify the presence of rhino horn. Another goal is to be able to determine the species when a whole rhino horn has been seized by one of their port inspectors.

In order to develop methods which will be usable in court, they need to examine as many samples of known rhino horn as possible, so that results will be statistically valid. They are seeking samples from rhinos in captivity as well as wild rhinos in their natural habitats. The samples can be scrapings or pieces. While milligram quantities are usable, larger quantities are more useful.

Because of the use of water buffalo horn and saiga antelope as potential substitutes for rhino horn in Chinese medicines, horn samples from those two species are desired as well.

If you are in a position to provide horn samples for this purpose, please contact Dr. Kent Oakes, Senior Forensics Specialist, at (503) 482-4191. He will provide you with data collection sheets to accompany each sample, and will also help obtain the permits necessary for shipping the samples.

DVUR KRALOVE UPDATE

A 26-year-old female northern white rhino (Nasima) at Dvur Kralove Zoo has in all probability been lost for future breeding efforts. Last summer she suffered a prolapsed vagina in her tenth month of pregnancy and aborted a well-developed female fetus. Although she responded well to treatment, there is a high risk of a recurrence of the condition with a future pregnancy.

Two younger females at Dvur Kralove have started to come into estrus. One of them, a 9-year-old born at Dvur Kralove, has been mated and is believed to be pregnant. Zoo officials are hopeful that breeding of northern whites will continue at Dvur Kralove despite the unfortunate loss of Nasima as a potential breeder.