

news

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World Association of
Zoos and Aquariums
WAZA | *United for
Conservation*[®]

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Report 2011 | insert



Tigers at Tiergarten Schönbrunn.
© Jutta Kirchner – Zoo Vienna

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Gerald Dick

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Dear WAZA members and friends!

The 77th Anniversary Year of WAZA has started with a series of interesting activities. The commemorative volume was very well received by our members and the book is also selling relatively well up to now. Please help to advertise this interesting documentation of our international zoo and aquarium community, which is available for just 14,99 € (follow the link on the WAZA website). On the website you will also find details for the WAZA Annual conference in Melbourne and the option to register as an early bird till 31 May. Since early February WAZA is on facebook and interesting stories about animals, conservation and zoo activities let the number of friends grow constantly.

WAZA was invited to take part in the IUCN SSC Specialist Groups Chairs' meeting and a special workshop addressing the relationship of ex situ and in situ as well as the cooperation between IUCN specialist groups and zoos and aquariums were addressed. As a result this issue of WAZA News contains a contribution related to the ex situ and in situ component of conservation and another article is about the potential role of zoos to conserve threatened plant species – an outcome of the IUCN gathering. At this year's World Conservation Congress, to be



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Gerald Dick at Tierpark Berlin.

held in Korea later in the year the plans for the decade on biodiversity will be discussed with WAZA members of the South and South East Asian region. This roundtable is also supported by the IUCN SSC and IUCN Commission on Education and Communication. With the support of WAZA president and his presence at such crucial international meetings, the zoo and aquarium community attracts further attention within the wider conservation community.

Gerald Dick

WAZA Executive Director ■



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Jörg Junhold – Leipzig Zoo, Germany

Sabah Rhino Research and Breeding

WAZA Project 11019

The Sabah rhino (*Dicerorhinus sumatrensis harrissoni*) is a sub-species of the Sumatran rhino. This sub-species is critically endangered. About 30–50 individuals have survived in two sanctuaries in Sabah (Borneo), with a few animals still occurring in isolated patches of rainforest. This sub-species is under severe pressure as its habitat, the lowland rainforest, is being converted into oil palm plantations. The remaining individuals of the small population are dispersed and single individuals are isolated in small patches of rainforest.

The State Government of Sabah has set up a breeding centre in order to keep and breed Sabah rhinos that were caught in isolated forest patches. If breeding is successful, offspring may be released into the reserves. Methods of assisted reproduction will be applied if natural breeding is not successful in order to increase breeding success. The Leibniz Institute for Zoo and Wildlife Research (IZW) in Berlin is a world-leading institute for these methods and has already examined two rhinos in Sabah in the end of 2009. Leipzig Zoo and the IZW have signed a MoU with the State Government of Sabah. Both institutions have worked out a Rhino Management Plan together with local partners involved in the Sabah Rhino Programme – the Sabah Wildlife Department, a local NGO “Borneo Rhino Alliance” and other partners.



© Rasmus Havmoller
Sabah rhino bull.



© Frank Oberwemmer
Breeding centre at Tabin
Wildlife Reserve.

The programme aims to:

- establish numbers and distribution of Sabah rhinos in the wild;
- catch and breed isolated individuals in the breeding centre;
- train local keepers and learn more about the conditions how they can be kept and bred successfully;
- adopt methods of assisted reproduction already used in zoos to wild living Sabah rhinos if natural breeding is not possible;
- implement a reintroduction programme after successful breeding;
- create awareness in Sabah and Europe for the Sabah rhino and the situation of the lowland rainforest;
- start a reforestation project.

Measures for the next years include the veterinary and scientific assistance of the IZW, which is partly funded by Leipzig Zoo, training of local keepers and consultancy by Leipzig Zoo animal keepers, development of education and awareness methods, development of sustainable tourism, and consultancy of the Sabah Wildlife Department about international zoo standards.

Leipzig Zoo will present the conservation efforts for the Sabah rhino in the tropical hall Gondwanaland, which opened in 2011, and start fundraising. ■