

current data on distribution, status, and trade for each range country. While the means to achieve these products are being explored, the RRC has opted to give access to all data through a Web site on the Internet, registered as www.rhinosourcecenter.com

Currently the Web site contains a full bibliography of all titles in the collection, which can be searched by author, date or word in the title. There is also access to a database of 'notes' on the rhinoceros, which again can be searched by subject, species or geographic location. Whatever the interest of the user, the result is a list of relevant data, which not only gives the full title of the publication, but also the exact text pertaining to that particular topic. When the original author wrote in German, French or Dutch, the section on the rhinoceros is found in an English translation, often translated for the first time. At the moment, about 3000 references have been analysed according to subject matter, emphasizing the literature of the 20th century.

While this is only a beginning, there is ample scope for the RRC to be established as a centre for all infor-

mation on research, conservation and management of all five species of rhinoceros. There will be a database of all current workers on the rhinoceros in the field and in captivity. However, to achieve optimum benefit for the global rhino community, the work of the RRC needs to be expanded and upgraded. The work can be done only when there is long-term commitment of funding from organizations, zoological gardens or individuals, who can thus make an important contribution to rhinoceros research and conservation.

References

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Rhinos in Chitwan

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'The Curse of Success' is the title of an article by T.R. Adhikari that appears in *Habitat Himalaya*, vol. 9, no. 3, 2002. The author, who has been involved in anti-poaching since 1991, examines the classic success of Nepal's rhino conservation. Rhinos have dramatically turned around from the brink of extinction. Establishing the Royal Chitwan National Park brought this about. In it, rhinos increased from 147 animals in 1972 to 544 in 2000. The rapid recovery of the rhino population in the Chitwan Valley, however, has set off frenzied poaching that may knock off the rhino's growth rate. Although a network of anti-poaching units has been formed, poaching increased drastically in 1998 and peaked at an all-time high in 2002.

Rhino poachers have become much more organized. Some took advantage of the breakdown in law enforcement caused by Nepal's major political upheaval to engage in their activities. Anti-poaching units have been weakened as informants have been

completely removed since 2001. In addition, the Maoist uprising has affected the army, which has vacated 24 guard posts in the park and now maintains only 10. Moreover, the media has over-exposed anti-poaching activities. Now poachers move into villages to carry out their operations inside the park. Access to the park's rhinos is easy because the national highway runs around the park and all rhino habitats lie adjacent to settlements. Early detection of poacher movements must therefore be the key.

These factors suggest that the conservation effort needs restructuring, emphasizing knowledge over capital. In the long run, arresting or suppressing poaching is foremost—but it is not the end. Therefore, a road map for conserving the rhino, based on contemporary knowledge, is much needed.

Details of this publication are available by downloading a free electronic copy through www.resourcehimalaya.org. Or write to Resources Himalaya, GPO Box 2448, Kathmandu, Nepal.