

RHINOCEROS ADVISORY GROUP

Chair:

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Primary Goals

The AAZPA Rhinoceros Advisory Group was officially recognized in January 1991 by the AAZPA's Wildlife Conservation and Management Committee (WCMC). While still in the formative stages, the group has the following long-term objectives: (1) to establish a regional management plan for rhinos which focuses on the efficient use of existing resources, the development of new resources, and the encouragement of effective relationships with other regional breeding programs (e.g., EEP, ASMP, etc.); (2) to develop strategies for the support of *in situ* conservation efforts through increased communication and interaction between SSP institutions, range country managers, NGO's and field scientists; (3) to identify research priorities and assist in the development and implementation of an aggressive research program with specific objectives in those areas of greatest concern; (4) to maintain current information on the status of all captive and wild rhino populations; and (5) to assess the implementation of all rhino SSP Master Plans and provide assistance wherever possible.

Data Table

	Current year
# of meetings	0
# of studbooks under umbrella	4
# of SSPs under umbrella	4
# of new studbook petitions submitted	0
# of new studbooks approved	0
# of new SSP petitions submitted	0
# of new SSPs approved	0

Special Concerns

It has become increasingly apparent that there is a real need to facilitate communication among and between people and programs involved with rhino conservation. Many are convinced that there are conflicting and competing agendas at work and that to support one aspect or approach necessarily detracts from another. Misinformation concerning the efficacy of the various approaches, especially captive breeding, needs to be eliminated. The AAZPA Rhino Advisory Group will use *Around The Horn, The Rhino Conservation Newsletter* to disseminate factual information and serve as a conduit through which individuals and institutions can communicate with everyone involved in the preservation of rhinos.

There must be a concerted effort to increase the amount of resources available to rhino conservation, especially in terms of money and space. While space allocation can be more efficient, the cost of developing and maintaining rhino programs such as research and *in situ* projects will be considerable. As a result, methods will have to be developed to provide these resources.

Progress Toward Goals

(1) The Rhino Advisory Group is in its formative stages and has only begun to develop specific long- and short-range objectives. The membership selection process is nearly complete and is intended to be flexible so as to allow for the greatest influx of ideas and discussion.

(2) A Rhino strategic planning meeting was held at the New York Zoological Park in July 1991. Much progress was made in identifying major concerns and in outlining various programmatic needs. An additional meeting will be held in connection with the 1991 AAZPA Annual Conference in San Diego.

Short-term Goals for Upcoming Year

(1) Complete an assessment of captive holding space and how it is currently allocated in the North American region.

(2) Initiate an assessment of the rhino husbandry and management practices in institutions holding black and white rhinos.

(3) Formalize a research subcommittee and charge it with the responsibility of developing an aggressive research strategy designed to assist in the veterinary, husbandry and reproductive management of rhinos.

- (4) In conjunction with the CBSG Rhino Captive Action Plan Working Group, initiate a concerted effort to address and resolve the black rhino subspecies question.
- (5) Begin the development of a unified Regional Collection Plan for all rhinos under the TAG umbrella.