HE WHITE RHINO: AAZPA - SPECIES SURVIVAL PLAN

n Update For The White Rhino Propagation Group
AAZPA Annual Conference - Miami

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White Rhino...

ies Survival Plan for white rhinos is designed to give
help to both the northern white rhino and the southern
ino and to coordinate activities with the other rhino
rams and to aid in the overall captive breeding
for all species of rhinoceros.

has been slow this year but hopefully positive as far
outhern white rhino in North America is concerned.

nern white rhino situation appears to be worsening
e. You will recall that last year IUCN's African
and Rhino Specialist Group requested AAZPA to help
acilities for animals that might be taken into protec-
tody from the Gramba National Park in northern Zaire.
was announced that a decision was reached between the
government officials and the IUCN to initiate a prog-
lded protection of the Gramba rhinos in the wild with
rstanding that if the population dropped to eleven (11)
the remaining individuals would be placed in a captive
program. The population figures are given as 426 in
in 1983 and 11 in 1984 as reported by Charles Mackie,
or Management Advisor for Gramba to IUNC/WWE June,
e report attached).

of 9th July 1984 from Lucy Vigne, Executive Officer,
'We have recently heard from a F.A.O. worker in
Central African Republic) that poaching is very bad
here and he believes that the northern white rhinos
n wiped out in C.A.R." This of course follows last
eport that the same is true for Sudan and Uganda.

White Rhino...

s been some progress made on the delineation of a
reeding plan for the southern white rhino mostly
the efforts of Rob Reese.

ll picture for the southern white rhino is not as
s it might be even though it is thought to be a species
ly immediate danger. Upon close examination of the

records of this specie in North America many problems are revealed that are troublesome. While the southern white rhino is reproducing in fair numbers in North America, the offspring have not added significantly to the effective population size (Ne) in that most of the animals produced in this country are related to a very few individuals.

One of the problems yet to be overcome is the fact that captive white rhinos do not reproduce well when kept as simple pairs. Statistics (presented by Reese) from records of 100 births point out the following:

1. Single male/single female groupings 3 births for 3%
2. Single male/multiple female groupings 11 births for 11.1%
3. Multiple male/single female groupings 0 births for 0%
4. Multiple male/mutiple female groupings 85 births for 85.9%

From the above information it is easy to see that a part of any breeding strategy for white rhino should include the grouping of multiple male/multiple female breeding herds. Further, founders that are already heavily represented should be taken out of the reproductive pool at least for the present. Founders that have not bred and are approaching the end of their reproductive years should be given high priority as individuals to reproduce. Immediate efforts should be made to separate half-sibling pairs before they reproduce.

Looking at the ages of white rhinos one can see that the age distribution for these animals is not good. Most of the founders fall between the 13 to 16 year age bracket. Many of the offspring born in this country have been exported. This is not necessarily bad because of their relationship to just a few founders, however, more youngsters of varied genetic backgrounds must enter into the program in order to better balance the age classes. We must get on with the translocation of several founders to form small groups. Several zoos have agreed to loan their white rhinos to the program. Their main concern, however, is that they must get black rhinos to place in their exhibits. It has not been worked out where the black rhino replacements are going to come from. Will they be imported from the wild or will they be captive bred and who will pay for the animal and their transportation.

Investigations are being conducted toward the possible use of artificial insemination and embryo transfers to help eliminate the need for transporting such large, fractous beasts around the country. For the immediate future we have attempted to group institutions into regions in order to reduce the distance of transporting animals and to give institutional members the opportunity to work within smaller geographical locations.

An update summary of the white rhino data is as follows:

Number of SSP Participant Institutions (SSPI)	47
Number of Founder Animals in SSPI	42.62
Total Number of Animals in SSPI	56.77
Additional Founders Outside SSPI in North America	11.16
Total Number of Animals Outside SSPI in North America	21.26
Total Number of Animals From All Sources in North America	77.103