

On 1 April 1993, the breeding female gave birth again. Due to problems with one of the infants, both juveniles were separated out from 5 April to 13 April. Although one of the infants died, both Hannah and Eddi were observed demonstrating appropriate parenting skills towards the remaining infant. By 18 April both juveniles were observed carrying the infant with no signs of aggression.

Temporarily separating juveniles from the group did not appear to have any detrimental effects on their ability to learn parenting skills. In ideal situations, family groups would be left intact, however in this instance short-term separation from the group did not appear to prevent juveniles from acquiring parenting skills.

GOOD AND BAD NEWS ON RHINOS

An Update from the United Nations Environment Program

NAIROBI, 12 May 1993 -- On Friday, 14 May, UNEP's (United Nations Environment Program) Special Envoy for rhinoceros conservation, Dr. Esmond Bradley Martin, gave a news conference on the present rhinoceros crisis, and UNEP's efforts to conserve one of the world's most endangered species. The news conference was held at UNEP's headquarters in Gigiri.

Since UNEP started its latest initiative to help save the rhinoceros in September 1992, rhinoceros numbers have increased in Kenya, Namibia, South Africa, peninsular Malaysia and India.

"Not a single rhino has been poached in Kenya since September 1991, and the population of black rhinos has increased in Kenya from around 340 in 1986 to 420 animals today", says Dr. Martin. Recent pressure by UNEP and others on some of the main markets for rhinoceros products, such as Yemen, the United Arab Emirates and China (Taiwan in particular), have resulted in moves to enforce bans on the sale of rhinoceros products in those places. China, with the largest stockpiles of horn in the world -- at least eight and a half tons -- banned the export of all medicines containing rhinoceros horn in late 1992 following a visit to China by UNEP's Special Envoy.

However, continued poaching by poor Zambians has reduced Zimbabwe's black rhinoceros population from around 2,000 in 1989 to under 400 today. Until recently, Zimbabwe was home to the world's largest black rhino population. Desperate poachers are killing rhinoceroses with only stubs of horns. Eleven black and white rhinos which had been dehorned by Zimbabwean authorities to deter poaching have been killed since 1992.

In Nepal, at least 18 rhinoceroses have been illegally killed from the middle of 1992 to early 1993, equal in number to the total poached in the seven-year period ending in 1990. Nepalese poachers are receiving US\$9,000 per kilo for the horn, about 20 times more than what an average Nepalese can earn in a legitimate occupation in one year.

In order to undertake high-level consultations with Governments regarding the present status and trend in rhinoceros conservation and of the present status and trend in importing and/or consuming rhinoceros products, UNEP's Special Envoy will be sent on a five-week mission to southern Africa and eastern Asia. "We want to learn more about how smugglers get their goods to market", says UNEP Executive Director Elizabeth Dowdeswell. "The world community must be made aware that rhinoceroses may disappear altogether, and government officials should take urgent and stringent measures to close down these illegal markets. The threat to the rhinoceros is not only a threat to biological diversity, but also to economies of those countries which rely on wildlife tourism for foreign exchange", said Dowdeswell.

A UNEP-sponsored conference among the Rhinoceros Range States, Consumer States, and Donors on how to finance the conservation of this species was scheduled for 28 June - 1 July in Nairobi.

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