

# Species

Newsletter of the Species Survival Commission

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The World Conservation Union

# From the Specialist Groups

## African rhino

**International best practice for African rhino conservation as promoted by the African Rhino Specialist Group is being increasingly applied in the Range States in both strategies and field programmes**

One of the best current examples is the programme re-establishing black rhino in Luangwa NP, Zambia, by the Zambian Wildlife Authority and Frankfurt Zoological Society. To this end, 10 rhinos were brought in from South Africa in 2006 and the target founder population of at least 20 animals will hopefully be achieved, with a final batch being reintroduced in 2008.

A workshop to review Kenya's black rhino strategy was held in early 2007 and a draft will soon be available for comment. The strategy is aiming at 700 black rhinos by 2011 with a minimum target annual rate of increase of 6% in the fenced sanctuaries. An improved performance in the latter will be assisted by the removal of all 255 elephants from Ngulia Sanctuary in Tsavo West, which was completed in late 2006, and by its planned expansion by 26 km<sup>2</sup>. The review of South Africa's black rhino conservation plan, which is also nearing completion, includes *inter alia*, a revised target of 3,000 plus for the most abundant south-central subspecies, and emphasis is given on creating large viable populations of 50 to 100 or more animals. Another important strategic planning initiative concerns the management of the four remaining northern white rhino in Garamba National Park, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). A workshop organized by African Parks Foundation and DRC's Institut Congolaise pour la Conservation de la Nature is being planned for September this year. In the interim, further surveys will be conducted to confirm the population size.

The AfRSG, in collaboration with the Asian Rhino Specialist Group and TRAFFIC (the wildlife trade monitoring network), has compiled an overview of the current status of rhino conservation and trade issues worldwide, and submitted this to the CITES Secretariat for consideration at CITES CoP 14, as requested in CITES Decision 13.23 where it was adopted by the Parties to the Convention.

*Martin Brooks, Chair*

## Amphibian

**Announcing the first winner of the Sabin Award for Amphibian Conservation**

Made possible by a generous donation from Andrew Sabin, the Amphibian Specialist Group is pleased to announce the winner of the first annual Sabin Award for Amphibian Conservation, which was presented in New York on May 17. This award recognizes contributions that an individual or group has made to amphibian conservation worldwide.

The recipient of this first award is Dr Luis Coloma for his pioneering work on the conservation of

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*Ecuador is ranked third in the world for total number of amphibian species and number of threatened species*

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amphibians in Ecuador. Despite being a relatively small country, Ecuador is ranked as third in the world for total number of amphibian species (447) and number of threatened species (163). Traditional threats to amphibians, such as habitat loss, combine with novel threats, such as climate change and disease. Dr Coloma has made a significant contribution to our body of knowledge on amphibian declines through research and has raised awareness of amphibian conservation in this important country.

*Robin D. Moore, Amphibian Conservation Officer, Conservation International*

## Asian elephant

**The Asian Elephant Specialist Group (AsESG) has begun work to produce a review of human–elephant conflict (HEC) assessment and mitigation practices in Asia**

The review will be prepared by the AsESG, and our partners in Governments and NGOs (and other interested individuals). The purpose of this review publication will be to provide an easy-to-access summary of successes and failures in HEC management and the reasons for these. We believe that gathering such information – much of which is currently in the grey literature or peoples' heads – in one publication will provide a valuable and indeed overdue resource.

The HEC review will be made available on the web and there will be a facility to submit new data and update existing entries so that the information contained in the review is kept as up to date as possible. This initiative builds on discussions held at last year's Asian Elephant Range States' Meeting

