

Asian Rhino Project

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Welcome to the February Newsletter

A warm welcome to the February Newsletter. A lot has been going on behind the scenes this quarter with an exciting new project funded in India to build a boma for the release of rhino to the Manas National Park. Two rhino have been translocated to the park which has had no wild rhino for approximately 10 years. This is an exciting project and we look forward to bringing you regular updates on the progress.

Andalas the first born Sumatran rhino calf is expected to arrive in Indonesia this month to join the Sumatran rhino breeding program at the sanctuary in Way Kambas. This is a great milestone for the project and we wish the team at the Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary all the best in assisting Andalas to adjust from his zoo environment in the USA to his exciting new home and more importantly 'girls'.

Kerry and Emma will be heading over to an International Rhino Keepers Workshop being held in Melbourne (the first time it has been held out of the USA) in May. This workshop is largely being managed by Brooke Squires (our Victorian manager) and Zoos Victoria and they are planning to promote the ARP as much as possible throughout the event for which we are very grateful. Hopefully we can pick up a few new members from there too!

A big thanks to all our volunteers and members for your continued support. Without you we could not do the amazing work we do!

Kerry Crosbie
Project Director

New Projects

Indian Rhinos Rehabilitation & Release, International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) and WTI (Wildlife Trust of India)

Request Amount from ARP: \$10,000 **Estimated Budget:** \$ 52,000 USD

In November last year IFAW (International Fund for Animal Welfare) and its partner, WTI (Wildlife Trust of India) requested a grant of \$10,000 from the Asian Rhino Project to fund the creation of a *boma* enclosure for the acclimatization of a one-horned Asian rhino (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) prior to its re-release back into the wild.

IFAW and WTI have been caring for Indian rhino calves at the Centre for Rehabilitation and Conservation (CWRC), situated near Kaziranga National Park, Assam, North East India. Their team rescues the rhino calves during the annual flooding of the Brahmaputra River in July-August and they are hand-raised at CWRC.

Of the three rhino calves rescued in July 2002 and July 2004, one has already been moved to a *boma* in Manas Rhino Rehabilitation Station in Manas National Park for *in-situ* acclimatization. At the time of the proposal, preparations were underway for the translocation of two more rehabilitated rhinos and one wild caught male rhino in 2007.

The CWRC developed from successful collaboration among WTI, IFAW and the Assam Forestry Department on the creation of a Mobile Veterinary Service Unit, deployed in 2000 to respond to wildlife emergencies in the region. It soon became evident that many rescued animals would not survive immediate re-release into the wild, either due to their young age or injuries. The CWRC was designed to care for these animals until they were capable of surviving release back into the wild.

CWRC is the only wildlife treatment and rehabilitation in the Assam district that has the capacity to care for an influx of animals displaced by the annual flooding of the Brahmaputra River. The facilities can accommodate between 30 and 50 animals, including a variety of mammals, birds, and reptiles. Enclosures designed to house either rhino or elephant calves can accommodate up to 12 individuals.

The centre responds to the emergency needs of all wild animals in distress. The team participates in rescue operations when called upon and also receives wild animals brought to its centre by the local people or the Forest Department. Attempts are made to release the temporarily displaced wild animals back to the wild immediately upon rescue. In cases where the animal is displaced for a longer time, the animal is brought to the centre for stabilization and released after a short period of time in captivity or hand reared till it is fit to be released back to the wild. Habitat suitability studies are done to confirm the place of release of the hand reared individual.



One of the females about to enter the crate for transport.
Photo courtesy of IFAW



Rhino being released into new boma funded by ARP. Photo
courtesy of IFAW

A Rhino Rehabilitation Station has been established in Bansbari Range of Manas National Park. New *bomas* have been built as and when rhinos are moved from CWRC for *in-situ* acclimatization. This year the crew are establishing two more Rehab Stations (satellite stations of CWRC): one for elephants in Doimari Range of Manas National Park and the other for wild buffalo (*Bubalus arnee*) in Dibru-Saikhowa National Park, Assam. As a policy, all hand-raised animals are radio collared for post release monitoring.

Two female rhino calves, now two and half years old, have now been moved to Manas National Park last month. The first animal moved to the Rehab Station in February 2006 was also a

female. Manas National Park had no wild rhinos as they were all exterminated during the last 10 years of political instability in the region. Stability returned to the region in 2004 after the demarcation and declaration of a separate Bodoland Autonomous Council (BTC). After 10 years of total neglect, normalcy has returned to the park as evident from the increase in the number of tourists. Wildlife Trust of India, IFAW's partner in India, has signed a MoU with BTC wherein the Council has assured total protection to the rhinos and elephants being moved to Manas for rehabilitation and release. Since all the rhinos under rehabilitation are females, permission has been sought from the Assam Forest Department and Government of India for capture and translocation of a male rhino from Pabitora Wildlife Sanctuary, Assam to Manas National Park. This translocation

program is scheduled to happen in April 2007. This will be the first ever 'wild to wild' rhino translocation program in Assam.

So far the rhinos seem to be settling in well.

A New Rhino Foundation in Indonesia – Yayasan Badak Indonesia (YABI) or Rhino Foundation of Indonesia (RFI)

A new foundation has been formed amalgamating all operations, assets, liabilities and programs (RPU, SRS, research etc) of two old foundations.

A Memorandum of Understanding between RFI and the Ministry of Forestry- Directorate General of Forest Protection and Nature Conservation (PHKA) will be negotiated and signed soon. The Foundations action plan will be reviewed regularly in line with government policy on species conservation. Recommendations from several international experts will also be offered on the management and conservation of rhino population.

The Executive Board of the Foundation is still in the process of finalising job descriptions, bylaws and other standard operating procedures. The strategy, action plan and business plan is expected to be completed soon. Tentatively, the program will cover 5 issues: Rhino Protection, Breeding, Research & Education, Fundraising & Ecotourism, and Communication & Information.

The Foundation already collaborates with International Rhino Foundation (IRF) and the Asian Rhino Specialist Group (AsRSG) of Species Survival Commission (SSC) of IUCN-World Conservation Union as a member of Board of Trustees. The Chairman of the Board of Trustees is Adi Susmianto from the Ministry of Forestry. The Foundation's expectation is to be recognized as an international organization.

Project Updates

ARP and the International Rhino Foundation Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary Update, Way Kambas National Park, Sumatra

All the rhinos are currently doing well and the rainy season has arrived, eliminating the fire risks in Way Kambas.

Things are moving fast now on the transfer of Andalas from LA Zoo to the SRS. All the permits and transport arrangements have been finalised and he is due to arrive this month. Preparations at the SRS are complete, all the fences are up (using the materials sourced through the ARP) and a small adaptation boma has been erected for his arrival. A larger boma in which Andalas can move into once he has acclimatized is also being constructed. It is expected that the Minister of Forestry will host an official welcome party at Jakarta airport upon Andalas's arrival. The picture featured of Andalas being crate trained is by Steve Romo.



After clearing customs and quarantine, Andalas will be trucked to the SRS under police escort. Everyone is very excited and the preparations are going well.

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On 26 November the SRS staff and Rosa celebrated her first year at the SRS. A picture of the event and Rosa's birthday cake is at left.

Torgamba has recovered well from his foot problems.

Field Survey Update Kerinci Seblat National Park (KSNP)

In August we agreed to fund a series of rapid field surveys. These are being implemented by the Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology (DICE), in partnership with Fauna and

Flora International-Indonesia Program and Kerinci Seblat National Park Management (KSNP) in an almost entirely data-deficient core area of the Eastern (Jambi) Block in KSNP. It is this forest block where it is believed a small but potentially significant population of Sumatran rhino may survive. Thus, any subsequent conservation actions taken by KSNP will be wholly dependent upon the field results of this rapid assessment.

The forest area is currently under threat from road building plans and mounting pressure to clear this forest for oil palm plantations and small scale farmland, which seeks to exploit possible road building activities. The primary purpose of this project is to confirm whether a population of rhinos does indeed survive in a remote core forest area in the KSNP Eastern Block and, if so, offer preliminary recommendations for subsequent conservation action.

The survey has begun with two of the 10 survey areas surveyed so far. The results are as follows:

- ❑ Area 1 found signs of Tiger, Sambar deer, Tapir, Wild pig, Sun bear and Wild cat (possibly Marbled cat). No rhino sign detected.
- ❑ Area 2 found signs of Tiger, Wild pig, Tapir, Sun bear, Serow, Muntjac, and Sambar deer. The only rhino signs reported was of an old rhino trap unfortunately.

We will keep you updated on the remaining 8 areas as they come in.

SOS Rhino Update

Sumatran Rhino In The Wild Captured On Video

During a routine patrol, Justin Lanjang, Team Leader for SOS Rhino Borneo's Rhino Protection Unit #5, together with his teammates James Sandiyang, Suhairin Putra, Marikus Suyat and Hirzi Luqman amazingly captured a video of a Sumatran rhino in the wild, using a hand-held video camera. They have also encountered two other direct sightings of rhinos. Just several seconds of video were captured, but the image was clear enough to prove that Sumatran rhinos do exist in pockets of Sabah's wild jungle.



"All the hard work has paid off" Justin Lanjang

A Note from Marc

Although moist tropical forest ecosystems cover only 2% of the planet's surface, 60-90% of the Earth's land-based species depend on them for habitat.¹ 23% of Earth's mammalian species are threatened with extinction, and most of these species are from the tropics.² Forest ecosystems contain "the highest species diversity of any ecosystem type",³ and tropical lowland rainforests - those beneath 500 m altitude - are the "most species-rich of all terrestrial habitats" - unfortunately, in many regions of the world, lowland tropical rainforests have "been reduced to less than 10% of their original areas."⁴

The Sumatran rhino is a conservation-dependent species. Its population was approximately 10,000 at the turn of the twentieth century, but by 1980 it had plummeted to about 1,000.⁵ In 2005 the International Rhino Foundation-IRF estimated there were some 300 wild Sumatran rhinoceros remaining. A recent population estimate of the Bornean subspecies (*Dicerorhinus sumatrensis harrissoni*) - which lives only in eastern Sabah - has its numbers at less than 30!⁶ Even if the actual number was 50% higher, without significant progress toward its protection in the wild the subspecies' fate is to join the list of species and subspecies extinguished during this, "the sixth major extinction event in the history of the Earth, and the greatest since the dinosaurs disappeared, 65 million years ago."⁷

Sabah's four reserves known or suspected to contain Bornean rhinos total about 480,000 ha in area. Individual Bornean rhinos have a range of about 1,000 ha, so these reserves potentially provide for 480 animals. This is an overestimate, however, because the effective population - one that includes only breeding adults - will be lower than the total population. And since *Dicerorhinus* tend to avoid areas within 2 km of human activity⁸, the effective area of habitat is significantly less than the actual area. In other words, 2 km-wide buffers external to each of the current reserves would be required to allow for a total population of 480. Developing a population of "at least 700-1000 [Bornean] rhinos"⁹ is identified as a long-term goal to prevent the subspecies' extinction. To sustain such a population, the current reserve system would therefore need to more than double in area.

The family *Rhinocerotidae* once included the Earth's largest land mammal, the *Paraceratherium*, and currently includes the world's third largest terrestrial mammal, the Indian, or One-horned rhino (*Rhinoceros unicornis*). In 2006, SOS Rhino confirmed through the tracks of an immature animal beside that of an adult (presumably its mother) that the Bornean rhino has recently bred in at least the far east of northern Borneo. This elicits some hope for the subspecies' future. But if this news fails to galvanise a redoubling of the efforts of the conservation community, its supporters, and relevant governments, the subspecies' fate is almost certain to follow that of its distant West African cousin (*Diceros bicornis longipes*) which the IUCN tentatively declared 'extinct' in 2006, and the genetic line of *Rhinocerotidae* will continue to contract.

If you've ever considered making a regular monthly tax-deductible donation to the Asian Rhino Project, I urge you to do so. If 50 ARP members donated \$20 per month, at least \$12,000 could

¹ UNEP Global Biodiversity Outlook, cited in Sengupta & Maginnis 2005: Forests and Development Where Do We Stand? In Sayer, J. (ed.) *The Earthscan Reader in Forestry & Development*, Earthscan, London, 11-58.

² IUCN 2006: *The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species*TM. Gland, IUCN, available online at < <http://www.iucn.org/themes/ssc/redlist2006/redlist2006.htm> >

³ Sengupta & Maginnis 2005 (see above).

⁴ MacKinnon 2000: Never say die: fighting species extinction. In A.C. Entwistle and N. Dunstone (eds.), *Priorities for the Conservation of Mammalian Diversity; Has the Panda had its Day?* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 335-353.

⁵ Pellegrini 2002, cited in SOS Rhino 2002: Saving the ancient rhino: From zoos to forests, science vs. extinction< <http://www.sosrhino.org/news/rhinonews060902.php> >

⁶ Dierenfeld, E.S., Kilbourn, A., Karesh, W., Bosi, E., Andau, M., and Alsisto, S., 2006: Intake, Utilization, and Composition of Browsers Consumed by the Sumatran Rhinoceros (*Dicerorhinus sumatrensis harrissoni*) in Captivity in Sabah, Malaysia, *Zoo Biology*, 25, 417-431.

⁷ Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity 2006: *Global Biodiversity Outlook 2*, Montreal.

⁸ Kinnaird, M.F., Sanderson, E.W., O'Brien, T.G., Wibisono, H.T., and Woomer, G., 2003: Deforestation Trends in a Tropical landscape and Implications for Endangered Large Mammals, *Conservation Biology*, 17, 1.

⁹ Foote, T.J., and van Strien, N., (eds.) 1997: *Asian Rhinos: Status, Survey and Conservation Action Plan*, IUCN, Gland and Cambridge.

be raised annually, and because the Australian dollar is stronger than the Indonesian, Malaysian and Nepalese currencies, funds raised here are able to be stretched further in those countries.

A Warm Welcome to our New Members

Leanne Andersen and Lorraine Dunn

Committee Updates

National Committee

The National Committee would like to welcome our new Secretary Daniel Scarparolo and Treasurer Lorraine Dunn. Both Loraine and Daniel offered to assist after attending our AGM in October last year. They were accepted by committee in November 06 and both have been doing a fantastic job ever since.

WA Branch – Emma Gatehouse

January saw the WA Branch set up a display for “Amazing Asia” month at Perth Zoo, which included colouring pages for the kids and educational posters along with membership and adoption forms available. January also saw the first branch meeting for 2007 in which some exciting new ideas were discussed for the up coming months.

We have a new committee member on the WA branch. Dean Main is one the Rhino Keepers at Perth Zoo, and is keen to contribute to the conservation of Asian Rhinos. Welcome Dean!

VIC Branch – Brooke Squires

Preparations for the Rhino Keeper Workshop are going very smoothly and I am thrilled about the level of exposure that ARP will gain with such an international audience.



ARP Seeks Good Quality Auction Items

The wonderful Joan Pearson of Sydney NSW will be holding a major fundraiser for the Asian Rhino Project in June this year when she holds one of her legendary luncheons. In the past Joan has raised thousands of dollars for great causes like ours such as the orangutans, bears, animal welfare and more. A great part of the fundraising is made through an auction held at the function.

If you, your workforce or someone you know could help us out with good quality items for this auction we would be most grateful! If you can help, please call Kerry on 08 89760952 to discuss or e-mail her at kerry.crosbie@asianrhinos.org.au Please; help us help them!

In the News – Asian Rhino Stories

Kaziranga's rhino fights back with villagers' support

India's endangered one-horned rhinoceros is charging back from the brink of extinction with forest wardens roping in villagers to combat poachers.

More: <http://www.teluguportal.net/modules/news/article.php?storyid=22786>

Medicine man caught by new curbs on ancient cures

CENTURIES of Chinese medicine clashed with modern demands to protect endangered wildlife when a Sydney court jailed a prominent traditional medicine practitioner for 18 months for importing endangered species.

More: <http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/medicine-man-caught-by-new-curbs-on-ancient-cures/2006/11/29/1164777657683.html>

Nepal court orders protection for threatened rhino

Nepal's Supreme Court has ordered the government to increase security in the country's biggest rhino reserve after local media reported that at least 10 of the animals have been killed since July, an official said.

More: http://today.reuters.com/news/articlenews.aspx?type=scienceNews&storyID=2006-12-04T103141Z_01_DEL271184_RTRUKOC_0_US-NEPAL-RHINO.xml&WTmodLoc=NewsHome-C3-scienceNews-2

Poachers kill another rhino in Chitwan National Park

Poachers have killed another rare one-horned rhino at the Chitwan National Park. The poachers shot and killed the rhino for its precious horn, reports said quoting the national park officials. It was the ninth one-horned rhino killed by poachers and local inhabiting inside the Chitwan National Park since July this year. Poachers had killed seven rhinos on different dates while the locals ambushed two rhinos to death in an attempt to keep them from destroying their crops. Last year, a census showed the population of one-horned rhinoceros, in the 1000-sq km national park had fallen to 372, its lowest level in 10 years, down from 544 in 2000.

More: <http://www.nepalnews.com/archive/2006/nov/nov28/news11.php>

Rhino poaching on the rise

Two days after the Supreme Court (SC) instructed the government to provide adequate security in Chitwan National Park to check the growing incidents of poaching of one-horned rhinos, poachers have critically injured a rhino on Tuesday in Bhimbali community forest in Padampur of eastern Chitwan. The rhino has sustained bullet injuries in leg and neck and its chances for survival is said to be quite low.

More: <http://www.nepalnews.com/archive/2006/dec/dec06/news03.php>

Other stories on this topic:

Poachers strike again in Chitwan, another rhino shot

<http://www.kantipuronline.com/kolnews.php?&nid=93596>

Injured Rhino Dies in Chitwan

One-horned rhino, which sustained bullet injuries some days ago, died in Chitwan this morning. A team of the Chitwan National Park and Chitwan District Forest Office (DFO) had been treating the rhino. "The condition of the rhino worsened after it was injured again in an attack by a male rhino on Wednesday night," said Baburam Bhandari, chief of the Chitwan DFO.

More:

<http://www.thehimalayantimes.com/fullstory.asp?filename=6a8Qa5sa.9amal&folder=aHaoamW&Name=Home&dtSiteDate=20061208>

Firm Charged with Illegal Importation

A Richmond firm has been charged with 14 counts under the endangered species act for importing medicines containing tiger, bear and rhinoceros derivatives. Wing Quon Enterprises was in Richmond provincial court late last month to face the charges that stem from an investigation by the wildlife enforcement division of Environment Canada.

More: <http://www.richmondreview.com/portals-code/list.cgi?paper=45&cat=23&id=787426&more=>

Six arrested for rhino poaching in Chitwan

The administration of Chitwan National Park are tracking down the one-horned rhino poachers by making a number of arrests. Security personnel of the national park yesterday arrested six persons with the help of local Maoist militia. This is the largest number of people to be arrested since the increase in rhino poaching.

More: <http://www.gorkhapatra.org.np/content.php?nid=8165>

Rhino poaching activities in Lampung significantly drops

Poaching activities at the Way Kambas National Park (TNKW) and the South Bukit Barisan National Park (TNBBS) have reduced significantly since the operation of Rhino Protection Unit (RPU) in the parks, an RPU officer said here on Tuesday (12/12).

More: <http://www.antara.co.id/en/seenws/?id=24611>

Three rhino poachers held near Kaziranga National Park

Three rhino poachers have been arrested and a huge cache of arms and ammunition recovered from their possession near the Kaziranga National Park here. Park Director D M Singh told PTI today that acting on a tip-off, a team of forest officials had launched a search operation near the park since Saturday and nabbed three poachers from Da-gaon area yesterday. Six rhinos have been killed by poachers since January this year, he said adding that the forest officials had also recovered the carcass of a male rhino recently.

More: <http://www.hindu.com/thehindu/holnus/004200612111361.htm>

Live and Let Live in Nepal: Wildlife versus Humans in Beautiful Nepal

A longer story about the Indian Rhino – some interesting reading in there.

<http://www.americanchronicle.com/articles/viewArticle.asp?articleID=17794>

Official apathy increases rhino poaching

Top officials at Chitwan National Park have admitted to "failure" in conserving rhinos owing to decreased morale of staffers following arrests of two park employees a few months ago. Including the latest incident Friday, the number of rhinos killed by poachers in the last five months has shot up to 10. This is the highest poaching rate so far. Expressing concern over the rising instances in Nepal of killing, by horn poachers, of the endangered one-horned rhinos that are found exclusively in South Asia, conservationist Dr Ravi Sharma says, "If this rate of poaching continues, there will be no rhinos left in a decade."

More: <http://www.kantipuronline.com/kolnews.php?&nid=94019>

Notorious weed killing rhinos

CHITWAN NATIONAL PARK, - On the surface, Mikania micrantha, locally known as "miles a minute", looks just like any other useful plant that adds spectacular greenery to the surrounding. But, this creeping weed, which was until 1993 alien to Nepal, has earned enough notoriety for destroying the grassland of endangered wild animals like rhinoceros and deer. Rapid spread of this unwanted weed has forced authorities to gear up for its elimination, as its spread - as authorities and experts point out - has been closely linked to recent killings of rhinos on an unprecedented scale.

More: <http://www.kantipuronline.com/kolnews.php?&nid=94443>

Chitwan Forest Office slaps 14-year prison term to poachers

The Chitwan District Forest Office on Monday handed a 14-year prison sentence in addition to Rs 1 lakhs fine to four individuals for smuggling rhino horns. According to sources, five forest staffers were injured after being struck by khukuris in the incident. One of the attackers has been taken into custody, sources quoting the District Forest Office said.

More: <http://www.kantipuronline.com/kolnews.php?&nid=94866>

Experts for Locals' Participation in Rhino Conservation

Participants in an interaction programme on Sunday warned that Nepal could see the state of some 34 years ago if the government fails to come up with solid steps for the conservation of the one-horned rhino. President of the Chitwan-based Community Development Organisation Somat Ghimire said local indigenous people should be given ownership for the conservation of the wild animals of their areas and they should be consulted while making policies. "New plans and policies should be adopted for the conservation of rhinos and it should be discussed with locals," he said.

More:

<http://www.thehimalayantimes.com/fullstory.asp?filename=aFanata0va2qzpa4a6Qa3a9a.axamal&older=aHaoamW&Name=Home&dtSiteDate=20061218>

Holy cow! Rhino row bogs down Nepal peace talks

Nepal's peace process has been disrupted by a row over whether the country should retain the cow as its national animal or replace it with the rhinoceros.

More: <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/DEL100621.htm>

Dead rhino was poached

The one-horn male rhino was found dead inside the park area. Officials said the rhino must have been poached a month ago. While lack of regular patrolling has resulted in many rhinos falling prey to poachers in recent months, an official at the park management, nonetheless, seemed least concerned. "Due to a financial crunch and other difficulties, we cannot monitor the whole area effectively," said Laxmi Manandhar, Conservation Education Officer at the Department of National Park and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC). He added that it's not practicable for park officials to keep tabs on the condition of each and every rhino.

More: <http://www.kantipuronline.com/kolnews.php?&nid=95394>

Poaching: A Big Threat To Chitwan Rhinos

The exquisiteness of the rhino because of its horn, which is considered to have medicinal purposes, has made it the Number One target of the poachers. Poaching in the last few years, and more so in the last six months or so, has threatened the very existence of the pachyderm. In the last six months along 36 rhino died and majority of them were illegally hunted by the poachers. Poaching has become a real threat to the existence of the wildlife, especially rhinos, say wildlife experts.

More: <http://www.gorkhapatra.org.np/content.php?nid=8835>

Poachers kill another rhino in Chitwan

Poachers have killed another rare one-horned rhino in the Chitwan National Park. The poachers shot and killed the rhino at Chisapari area of Shaktikhor VDC, Chitwan district, and got away with its precious horn, reports said. Chisapani lies between the camp of the 3rd Division of the Maoist People's Liberation Army (PLA) and their Bethan Memorial Brigade. Reports said the PLA men prevented armed forest guards from reaching Chisapani, insisting that they would not allow armed persons around the campsite. This was the 12th one-horned rhino, also known as rhinoceros unicornis, killed in Chitwan in the last five months. Poachers had killed ten rhinos on different dates while the locals ambushed two rhinos to death in an attempt to keep them from destroying their crops.

More: <http://www.nepalnews.com/archive/2007/jan/jan02/news11.php>

Conservation experts fear rhinos near extinction in Nepal

Nepalese wildlife experts and activists painted a bleak picture for the endangered one-horned Asian rhinoceros in the country's protected reserves, a Nepalese newspaper report said Monday. The English-language Himalayan Times quoted conservation activists as saying that the animal would be extinct in the country within the next 20 years if the current rate of poaching continues.

More:

http://science.monstersandcritics.com/news/article_1238603.php/Conservation_experts_fear_rhinos_near_extinction_in_Nepal

Other stories on this topic:

Lack of coordination cause of increased rhino poaching

More: <http://www.gorkhapatra.org.np/content.php?nid=10147>

Statue of Asiatic rhino to be built

With the endangered one-horned rhinos in Chitwan National Park facing increasing threat of extinction, a statue of the species is being built in Narayanghat to raise awareness on the importance of protecting rhinos. The statue will be made public during the Chitwan Festival that is to be held very soon.

More: <http://www.kantipuronline.com/kolnews.php?&nid=96077>

DFO to set up rhino conservation camps

NAWAL - The District Forest Office (DFO) here is setting up seven rhino conservation camps with five armed forest guards at each camp in Nawalparasi district within a week. "The rhino conservation camp is a new concept of the DFO launched to control rampant rhino poaching," said Bijay Raj Poudel, district forest officer. The DFO has asked District Administration Office to return arms that were handed over to the administration office during the insurgency. The 11,000 hectare area of buffer zone in the district is the grazing field for CNP's rhinos.

More: <http://www.kantipuronline.com/kolnews.php?&nid=97577>

Regulatory change brought to stop poaching of rhinos

Speaker Subas Chandra Nemwang said that poaching the race one-horned rhino is the attack upon the entire Nepal. While inaugurating Chitwan Festival-2063 at Narayangarh Friday, he expressed his firm commitment that the House of Representatives would be committed to carry out any type of initiatives taken for the preservation of one horned rhino. He also informed the government has brought about changes in the previous regulation of releasing inmate and detainee from the custody and quoted Home Minister Krishna Prasad Sitaula as saying none involving in poaching scarce wildlife would be released before the full term. Noting that all political parties should be united in the campaign for preserving one horned rhino, he added that precaution should be taken in time as to prevent the Narayani river from the pollution.

More: <http://www.gorkhapatra.org.np/content.php?nid=10305>

Other stories on this topic:

No more freeing rhino poachers, says Badu

More: <http://www.nepalnews.com/archive/2007/jan/jan07/news11.php>

MPs concerned over killings of rhinos

More: <http://www.kantipuronline.com/kolnews.php?nid=96799>

Rhino Poaching No Big Deal for Govt Official!

The unabated rhino poaching is making headlines, but the acting secretary at the Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation, Udaya Raj Sharma, says the poaching is not "a big issue." Sharma, however, urged the government to provide two billion rupees to curb poaching.

More:

<http://www.thehimalayantimes.com/fullstory.asp?filename=aFanata0va2qzpa4a7a9a3a9a.axamal&folder=aHaoamW&Name=Home&dtSiteDate=20070111>

Rare Nepal rhinos mysteriously disappear

Dozens of endangered Great One-horned rhinoceros have mysteriously disappeared from a nature reserve in south-west Nepal over the past few years, a wildlife official said. Authorities introduced 72 rhinos, also known as the Indian rhinoceros, in the Babai Valley, 320 km south-west of Kathmandu, as part of a conservation drive that started in 1984. "We have records showing 23 rhinos had died due to poaching or other causes. The rest are missing," Laxmi Prasad Manandhar, a senior official at the Department of National Park and Wildlife Conservation, said.

More:

<http://www.smh.com.au/news/World/Rare-Nepal-rhinos-mysteriously-disappear/2007/01/04/1167777183361.html>

Amnestied rhino poachers at it again

Two of the nine poachers released from jail on September 19 under a general amnesty by the cabinet were nabbed by security forces at Chitwan National Park (CPN) a few days ago, along with poaching equipment and guns. The duo, whose names are mysteriously being kept secret by the Park officials, have been detained at CNP head office at Kasara, Chitwan.

More: <http://www.kantipuronline.com/kolnews.php?&nid=96342>

58 rhinos died in Kaziranga in 2006

The Kaziranga National Park, home to the endangered one-horned rhinos in Assam, lost 58 of its prized inhabitants in the year 2006, a State Forest Department report said. According to the report, as many as 58 rhinos were either killed by poachers or met natural death during the year, which also saw the death of 14 elephants inside the national park, a world heritage site. While 53 rhinos died due to natural causes, five were poached, the report said. The Forest Department also arrested 27 poachers with rifles last year, it said. The park lost 43 rhinos in 2001, 66 each in 2002 and 2003, 104 in 2004 and 80 in 2005.

More: <http://www.hindu.com/thehindu/holnus/002200701050311.htm>

Nepal rebels to help protect rhinos

Nepal's communist rebels, who have halted their decade-old insurgency, agreed to patrol the country's southern jungles to protect endangered one-horned rhinos against poaching, officials said Friday. Maoist rebels at Chitwan National Park are to begin patrolling the jungles in the area about 125 miles south of the capital Katmandu, said local rebel leader Abiral, who uses only one name.

More: <http://www.pressofatlanticcity.com/news/world/story/3464951p-12679403c.html>

Poachers gore Nepal's rhino success story

Continuous political turmoil and the government's controversial policy of pardoning poachers have dealt a deathblow to the success story Nepal once revelled in - the conservation of the endangered greater one-horned rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*).

More: <http://www.indiaenews.com/nepal/20070103/34508.htm>

Conservation Experts Call for Fresh Rhino Census

Over two dozens of wildlife experts, representing their conservation organizations, on Tuesday demanded the government hold immediate counting of rhinos. "We have decided to ask the government to hold a fair and immediate count of rhinos in Nepal as the poaching is growing to unprecedented rate and we still lack exact data on how many were killed, died and how many remain in the conserved areas," said Ukesh Bhujju, the chairman of Nepal National Committee of IUCN Members. He is of view that a fresh rhino count will make lots of clarifications regarding data on surviving and lost numbers of the rhinos. He said, "Many of the participating members stressed on recount of rhinos." The last Rhino Count was held on March of 2005, which indicated that Nepal had 372 rhinos. And after that, it is estimated that 264 rhinos have been died either of natural death or by poaching.

More: http://www.gov.bw/cgi-bin/news.cgi?d=20070110&i=Rhinos_roam_freely_at_Moremi_park

Rhino Action Plan Launched

The Greater One-Horned Rhinoceros Conservation Action Plan for Nepal (2006-2011) was released by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Hon. Mr. Shubash Nembang, during the Parliamentary Conservation Committee meeting held in Kathmandu on 7 January 2007.

The action plan gives further shape to short- and long-term strategies for rhino conservation. The nine objectives focus on research, habitat expansion, translocation, improved human-rhino conflict, strengthening anti-poaching, building infrastructural capacity, limiting ex-situ conservation, increasing collaboration on all levels, and ensuring sustainable funding to implement the plan. This action plan was supported by WWF from inception to completion. We are committed to continuing our efforts in saving the rhinos in Nepal.

More:

http://www.panda.org/about_wwf/where_we_work/africa/where/madagascar/news/index.cfm?uNewsID=91820

Rhino poaching is the most pressing issue facing Nepal's wildlife today. With rhino populations shrunk by about a third since 2000, commission members of the World Conservation Union (IUCN) in Nepal submitted a petition to the Environment Conservation Committee of the Nepalese House of Representatives on 12 January 2007 to prompt immediate action in favour of Nepal's rhinos.

Nepal's one-horned rhinoceros population has declined from a population of 612 individuals in 2000 to only 405 today, with poaching being the main reason for this decline - at least 124 rhinos have been killed by poachers. While the country is fighting to boost the threatened rhino population, coupled with addressing the post-conflict recovery measures, the government, conservation organizations and civil society have been exploring several ways and means to support the conservation of this pachyderm *Rhinoceros unicornis* listed as "endangered" on the IUCN Red List. To help respond to this crisis, on 10 January 2007 IUCN Nepal brought together members and experts to provide the Government of Nepal with sound scientific know-how and policy advice on how to address the rhino issues in Nepal. A total of 25 experts and core conservationists participated in the interaction programme.

More: http://www.iucn.org/themes/ssc/news/2007_articles/rhino_poaching_nepal.htm

Nepal Army deploys sniffer dogs to check rhino poaching

The Nepalese Army would press into service sniffer dogs at its famed Chitawan National Park to prevent poaching of the rare one-horned rhino. The army has allocated four high breed dogs at Chitawan National Park, the largest habitat of rhinos, said Lt Col Sudarshan Bikram Rana adding the dogs will be deployed along with anti-poaching units.

More: <http://www.hindu.com/thehindu/holnus/001200701291422.htm>

CWRC rhino calves heading for Manas

The Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) along with its supporting partner, the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) has released two female rhino calves, both aged about three and half years, reared in the Centre for Wildlife Rehabilitation and Conservation (CWRC) situated at Panbari in the vicinity of the Kaziranga National Park. They would be released in the Manas National Park. It is the second such occasion of the WTI and IFAW releasing rhinos in the Manas National Park. The first female rhino was released in the Park in February 2006.

More: <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/details.asp?id=jan2907/at06>

Rhino babes move out of Kaziranga woods

http://www.telegraphindia.com/1070130/asp/northeast/story_7322160.asp

IFAW Releases Rhinos Back To Wild in India

<http://www.ifaw.org/ifaw/general/default.aspx?oid=202830&msource=DA060801001>

Rhino found dead after "territorial fight"

A male rhino was found dead at Kawasoti VDC-9 of Nawalparasi district in Chitwan National Park. The rhino, which was discovered with its horn and hooves intact, is believed to have died as a result fight between two territorial rhinos.

More: <http://www.kantipuronline.com/kolnews.php?&nid=99005>

One rhino dead in CNP buffer zone area

<http://www.nepalnews.com/archive/2007/jan/jan30/news05.php>

Rhinos in limbo

HE was Sabah's last hope to boost the dwindling numbers of Sumatran rhinos. But in a tragic event, Tanjung, the only remaining captive male rhino in the state, was killed last August by a falling tree branch. A storm the previous day had inflicted much damage to the Orang Utan Rehabilitation Centre in Sepilok, Sandakan, where the breeding centre is located. With the death of 15-year-old Tanjung, only the 25-year-old female Gelugob remains.

More: <http://thestar.com.my/lifestyle/story.asp?file=/2007/2/6/lifefocus/16759102&sec=lifefocus>

Indonesia Denies Coffee Growing Endangering Wildlife

The government of Indonesia's main coffee-growing area of Lampung denied on Wednesday allegations that coffee plantations had endangered wildlife in a World Heritage Site on the southern tip of Sumatra island. The WWF conservation group said last week coffee growers were clearing land in the Bukit Barisan Selatan National Park and illegal coffee bean growing could wipe out already endangered tigers, elephants and rhinos within 10 years. The Lampung provincial government said in a statement preventive measures had been taken to reduce illegal land clearing in the protected forest.

More: <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/JAK341367.htm>

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