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**SPECIAL ISSUE**  
**PROCEEDINGS OF THE FOURTH IUCN/SSC**  
**ASIAN RHINO SPECIALIST GROUP MEETING**  
**Jakarta, Indonesia, 13 - 14 October 1986.**



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**Front Cover :**

Jalu, the four year old male Sumatran rhino captured in Torgamba forest, Sumatra, enjoying his new "quarters" at the Ragunan Zoo, Jakarta.

**Back Cover :**

Forest conversion in progress, Torgamba, Riau, Sumatra.  
Photographs by Syafii Manan.

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE FOURTH IUCN/SSC ASIAN RHINO SPECIALIST GROUP MEETING

— A note from the Editors.

The Fourth IUCN/SSC Asian Rhino Specialist Group Meeting was held at the Ministry of Forestry Building, Manggala Wanabakti, Jakarta, from October 13 to 14, 1986.

The Meeting was convened by the Chairman of the IUCN/SSC Asian Rhino Specialist Group, Mr. Mohd. Khan bin Momin Khan in order to review the progress made since the last meeting that was held in Singapore in 1984, in the field of conservation and management of rhinos in Asia, and also to reach a consensus on what the priorities should be for the coming years. The emphasis was on the two species of rhinos in Southeast Asia, namely the Sumatran rhino (*Dicerorhinus sumatrensis*) and the Javan rhino (*Rhinoceros sondaicus*) whose prospects for long-term viability in the wild, are not as good as those for the Great Indian one-horned rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*).

The status of the Sumatran rhino was given particular attention in the light of the recent developments in Malaysia and Indonesia where much progress had been made in both *in situ* as well as *ex situ* conservation of the species. A most encouraging news was the discovery of some Sumatran rhino in Sarawak. Even quite small local populations are valuable and should be protected wherever practicable. On the other hand, in areas where the animals have absolutely no hope for survival, as in the case of Torgamba production forest in Sumatra, some animals were captured in a collaborative programme between the Directorate General of Forest Protection and Nature Conservation in Indonesia and the Howletts and Port Lympne Zoo Park in the United Kingdom in order to propagate the species in captivity in zoos. This points to the fact that the last refuge for the rhinos may require skillful management, both in nature as well as in captivity.

In the wild the rhinos are threatened by poachers throughout their range. The Asian rhino horn is of very high commercial value. A kg of rhino horn can fetch anything between US\$ 4,000 to 9,000 in the black market. At such a price, the continued survival of the animals will always be at risk. The recent announcement that Singapore had acceded to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) is most welcome and it augurs well for wildlife conservation in general. The use of substitutes in patent medicines should also be encouraged as a



measure to reduce the demand for rhino horn.

The Javan rhino faces the bleakest prospects for long-term survival on account of its small population size. It remains the rarest large mammal in the world. Its rarity alone does not allow any experimentation at the moment. Given the lack of experience in maintaining and breeding this animal in captivity, it was felt that it would be taking a big risk if some animals were to be captured for breeding in zoos.

There is an urgent need for a number of surveys to be carried out to determine the whereabouts of the viable populations and those that are "doomed". In the final analysis, the overwhelming emphasis of any conservation policy must be in the maintenance of forest cover over large areas uninterrupted by human settlements, where remoteness, density of cover and difficulty of terrain provide natural protection. The prospects for the long-term survival of the rhinos in Asia, although grim need not be hopeless. In this issue of RIMBA INDONESIA, we present the Proceedings of the Fourth IUCN/SSC Asian Rhino Specialist Group Meeting.

**April 1987**

**Bogor, Indonesia**

**Syafii Manan,**  
Directorate General of  
Forest Protection and  
Nature Conservation,

and

**Charles Santiapillai,**  
World Wildlife Fund  
Indonesia Programme.

**DEDICATED  
TO  
THE HONOURABLE MINISTER OF FORESTRY  
DR. SOEDJARWO**

The first of these is the fact that the forest is a natural resource which is essential for the well-being of the community. It is a resource which is not renewable and which is being depleted at an alarming rate. The second is the fact that the forest is a source of income for the community. It is a source of income which is being depleted at an alarming rate. The third is the fact that the forest is a source of employment for the community. It is a source of employment which is being depleted at an alarming rate. The fourth is the fact that the forest is a source of food for the community. It is a source of food which is being depleted at an alarming rate. The fifth is the fact that the forest is a source of shelter for the community. It is a source of shelter which is being depleted at an alarming rate. The sixth is the fact that the forest is a source of medicine for the community. It is a source of medicine which is being depleted at an alarming rate. The seventh is the fact that the forest is a source of raw materials for the community. It is a source of raw materials which is being depleted at an alarming rate. The eighth is the fact that the forest is a source of recreation for the community. It is a source of recreation which is being depleted at an alarming rate. The ninth is the fact that the forest is a source of beauty for the community. It is a source of beauty which is being depleted at an alarming rate. The tenth is the fact that the forest is a source of life for the community. It is a source of life which is being depleted at an alarming rate.

DEDICATED  
TO  
THE HONOURABLE MINISTER OF FORESTRY  
DR. SOEDJAWO

...





**Dr. Soedjarwo**  
Minister of Forestry  
Republic of Indonesia





## MENTERI KEHUTANAN REPUBLIK INDONESIA

### MESSAGE

As a developing country, Indonesia's economy depends largely on the exploitation of its vast but finite natural resources. But an unbalanced economic development can deplete such a resource base on which the country's long term development ultimately depends. The pace of development in the recent decades has increased so much that a number of land development programmes have transformed enormous areas of forest into cultivated fields, leading to the disappearance of animals especially the large mammals such as the rhino, from their former habitats. We must therefore recognize the need to reduce the rate of deforestation and manage our natural resources more sustainably.

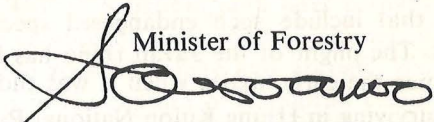
Three species of rhino occur in Southeast Asia, namely the Indian or Greater One-Horned Rhino, the Javan or Lesser One-Horned Rhino and the Sumatran Two-Horned Rhino. Throughout their range, the rhinos are in conflict with man and are therefore on the brink of extinction. Of the three species of rhino extant in Southeast Asia, the Javan and Sumatran rhinos face the bleakest prospects for long term survival. A combination of poaching and habitat loss has contributed to the rapid decline in number of these once common and widespread species. The high value of their horn makes them extremely vulnerable to poaching.

Indonesia has taken a number of measures to conserve the rhinos. These range from improvement of their habitats to increased anti-poaching efforts and tighter legislation. Lately the *in situ* conservation measures are being complemented by such *ex situ* measures as the captive breeding programme designed especially to safeguard those rhinos that are doomed in their present habitats as a result of the rapid conversion of the forests to other land uses. Such gene banks offer the possibility for returning the animals to the wild at a later stage. However, for any developing country, the most economical gene bank must surely be the proper management of the animals in their natural habitats.



Conservation problems are often rooted in the socio-economic conditions of the country. In Indonesia, conservation of natural resources must be seen in the context of the country's rapidly growing human population and its impact on this resource base. Conservation and development are inextricably inter-related. We must adopt a policy for the wise utilization of our natural resources so that we could continue to derive the benefits from such resources without eventually destroying them. This calls for the sustainable utilization of our natural resources.

The two species of rhino in Indonesia represent an outstanding component of our natural heritage, and so every effort must be made to ensure their continued survival in their natural habitats. In 1978, Indonesia acceded to CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna) which effectively banned the trade in rhino products. Nevertheless, poaching still remains a serious problem on account of the high commercial value of the rhino horn. The only long term solution to stopping the trade in rhino products depends on how successful we are in reducing the demand for them. There is an urgent need to educate the public to make them more aware of the conservation problems. The IVth IUCN/SSC Asian Rhino Specialist Group Meeting gives us reasons to be optimistic that international organizations would continue to assist us in our efforts to conserve the rhinos.



Minister of Forestry

DR. SOEDJARWO