
CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: ASIAN RHINO SPECIALIST GROUP

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Under the auspices of the AsRSG and in collaboration with the Directorate General of Forest Protection and Nature Conservation (PHPA) in Indonesia and many NGOs, a Javan Rhino Colloquium was conducted on 1-3 July 1997 at the Safari Garden Hotel, Cisarua, Bogor, Indonesia. Funds and encouragement were provided by the Rhino and Tiger Conservation Fund (RTC) of the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

The ultimate goal of the conservation programme for this species is to ensure long-term viability. Towards this end, the objectives of the Colloquium were:

- To assemble all the principle parties involved or interested in conservation efforts for the Javan rhino in Ujung Kulon as well as representatives working with the species in Vietnam to define better and co-ordinate interests, activities, and needs.
- To attempt to arrive at a consensus plan of action for conservation of the Javan rhino in Ujung Kulon, that would include:
 - affirmation of priorities.
 - development of detailed proposals for effective actions.
 - identification of parties who would implement actions which would co-ordinate and reconcile the various initiatives and interests.
 - formulation of a work plan and time table.
 - consideration of mechanisms for long-term financial sustainability of Javan rhino.
 - conservation in Ujung Kulon.
- To integrate and prioritise various kinds of conservation activities, i.e. protection, management, and research.
- To provide guidance and priorities for funding agencies.

- To advance effective actions to conserve the Javan rhino in Ujung Kulon.
- To delineate some possible actions for Javan rhino in Cat Loc Wildlife Reserve, Vietnam.

The Colloquium comprised intensive and interactive sessions in both plenary and working groups. The situation in Ujung Kulon was considered **first** and the representatives from Vietnam participated in the various working groups. Five major working groups were convened to discuss Ujung **Kulon**. The discussion topics for the working groups were:

- I. Census and survey methods of rhinos.
2. Intensive protection and institution aspects of rhino conservation in Ujung Kulon, including: rhino protection units; facilities and equipment; and training.
3. Habitat research and management, including: status, change and management; numbers of Banteng and other herbivores and their impact on rhinos; and the carrying capacity for rhinos.
4. Population and habitat viability analysis (PHVA) considerations, including: target population size for Ujung Kulon; establishment of a second population of Javan rhino in Indonesia; and creation of a rhino sanctuary within Ujung Kulon.
5. Community interactions.

Each working group organised its considerations according to a number of major questions and points about each major problem as summarised in Table I which provided the framework for the Colloquium. Reports of the individual working groups as well as other background documents were provided. Thereafter, there was a plenary session organised along the same framework to delineate some suggestions for the conservation of Javan rhinos in Vietnam.

A number of important recommendations and results emerged from the Colloquium.

For Ujung Kulon National Park, Indonesia, recommendations were:

1. To establish 2-3 rhino protection units (RPU's).
2. To improve rhino censuses by intensifying the transect counts in conjunction with extensive photo trapping.
3. To initiate habitat management experiments entailing the removal of Langkap and Banteng in an endeavour to expand carrying capacity. This may help to facilitate the attainment of a target population size of 1 00 Javan rhinos.

A direct result of the Colloquium has been the formation of a Javan rhino consortium to continue the communication and co-ordination of all the organisations involved in Javan rhino conservation in Indonesia.

For Cat Loc Wildlife Reserve and Cat Tien National Park, Vietnam recommendations were:

1. To conduct a track count of rhino in Cat Loc in early 1998 with technical assistance from experts from Indonesia and to correlate the track count with a photo census later.

2. To initiate habitat analysis work in 1998, again with technical assistance from Indonesia.
3. To encourage the large WWF project being conducted in Cat **Tien** to provide for specific rhino action, including increasing guards in Cat Loc from eight to 40.

The full results and recommendations of the Colloquium will be published and will be available from the AsRSG.

Progress continues on developing the managed breeding centres in native habitat for the Sumatran rhino in both Indonesia and Malaysia. The first three rhinos (one male from England and two females from Indonesia) will be moved from zoos to the Sumatran rhino sanctuary called Suaka Rhino Sumatera (SRS) in Way Kambas National Park, Sumatra, Indonesia during the first week of October 1997. Further improvements in facilities, staff, and programmes are being implemented at the Sungai Dusun Rhino Conservation Centre in Peninsular Malaysia. Meanwhile, matings have occurred with a pair of Sumatran rhinos at the Cincinnati Zoo in the United States.

Readers are reminded that the AsRSG has a subpage on the IRF website at the <http://www.rhinos-irf.org>.