

Rhinoceros & Tiger Conservation Fund

Rhinos and tigers are magnificent creatures—big, powerful, and charismatic. Unfortunately, these same qualities make them popular targets. Rhino and tiger body parts are in high demand on the global black market. Tiger organs and bones and rhino horns are used in Asian medicines, which are sold to consumers who believe these animal products convey strength, health and virility. Rhino horns are also carved for dagger handles as a coveted status symbol in the Middle East. The illegal trade in animal parts is a profitable business and the demand for these products generates an ongoing temptation for poachers. Rhinos and tigers also fall victim to poachers' snares, set to trap other animals for bushmeat or trophies.

In addition to poaching-for-profit, tigers are killed by local villagers who fear attacks on humans or livestock. As human populations encroach further

into the habitats of wild animals, the resulting conflict poses a serious threat to both human and animal safety.

Wild tigers, once abundant throughout Asia, now live in small fragmented groups, mostly in protected forests, refuges and national parks. Experts estimate that more than 500 tigers are killed each year. Recent surveys indicate the South China tiger may have become extinct in the wild, with only 47 remaining alive in China's zoos.

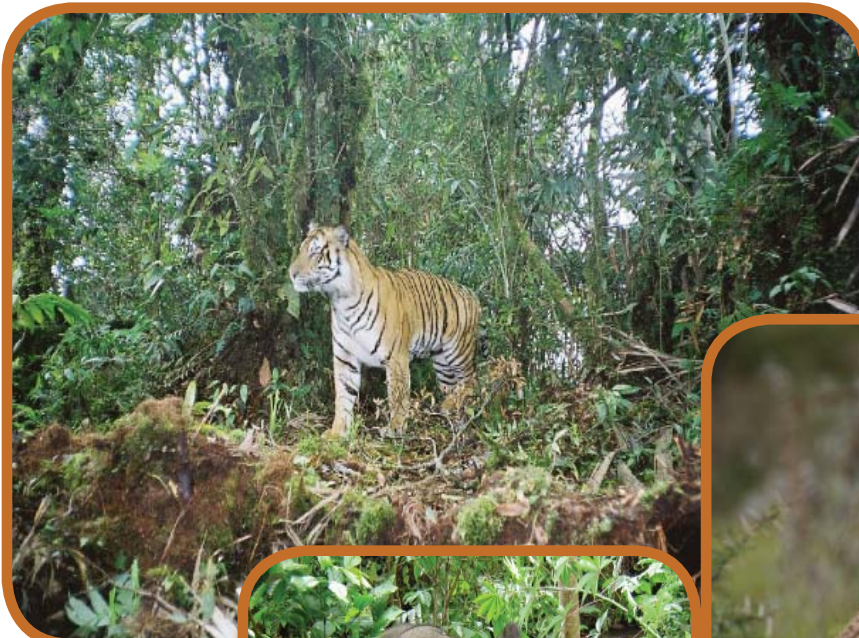
Wild rhinos can still be found in parts of Asia and Africa, but they too live in small fragmented populations, which may not be viable (due to lack of breeding opportunities and risk of random event or disease). Sumatran rhinos have decreased by 50 percent in the past 18 years leaving only about 300 surviving, primarily in Indonesia and Malaysia.

Before 1900, millions of black rhinos

occurred throughout most of sub-Saharan Africa, but between 1970 and 1992, rhino populations declined 96%. Black rhinos went extinct in many range states, and by 1992, only 2300 individuals survived in seven countries.

But while rhinos continue to be killed for their horns, increased security and greater anti-poaching efforts have led to increases in some populations over the past decade. Recovery of Africa's white rhino demonstrates the benefits of strong law enforcement and conservation management. Decimated by hunting, Africa's white rhinos nearly became extinct with only about 100 surviving in the wild. Now, with good protection and successful management, the subspecies has increased to more than 11,000 and is the most abundant of all rhinos.

In 1994, the U.S. Congress passed a law to establish the Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Fund. Grants are awarded from this fund for anti-poaching programs, habitat and ecosystem management, development of nature reserves, wildlife surveys and monitoring, management of human-wildlife conflict, public awareness campaigns and other conservation efforts related to rhino and tiger survival. With this assistance there is hope that rhinos and tigers will return to healthy numbers.



M. Linkie (Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology/ Fauna & Flora International)



Indonesian Rhino Conservation Program/
International Rhino Foundation



© Kat Combes

The 2007 Congressional appropriation of \$1.6 million, along with matching funds from host countries and conservation groups, funded 36 vital rhino and tiger conservation projects, including the following efforts:

- Enhancing the capacity of law enforcement authorities to combat wildlife crime by establishing a database in Nepal to monitor the activities of rhino and tiger poachers, traders, and their associates.
- Expanding the science based protection system for tigers and their prey in Thung Yai Wildlife Sanctuary of Thailand's Western Forest Complex by determining density estimates for tigers and prey, establishing a well-run and efficient monitoring system, and training teams for patrolling and monitoring.
- Building a constituency for tiger conservation through targeted tiger focused education in Malaysia by conducting tiger conservation education workshops for government rangers and educators, teaching them to assess the conservation impact of their teaching programs, and initiating a new wildlife conservation education curriculum for teachers.
- Strengthening tiger conservation in Nam Et-Phou Louey National Protected Area, Lao PDR, by resolving human-tiger conflict, strengthening patrolling and enforcement, working to decrease poaching resulting from use of explosives in livestock carcasses, and increasing public awareness among people living in nearby villages.
- Improving the wireless communication network and mobility of the frontline forest staff of Manas National Park in India to conserve the rhino and its habitat within the park.
- Ensuring the persistence of the Amur tiger in the transboundary area between Russia and China through maintaining adequate tiger habitat, continuing monitoring and education programs, and facilitating the conservation dialogue between Russia and China.
- Providing for emergency veterinary expenses in Zimbabwe, to capture and move rhinos to areas of greater security, and to treat rhinos that have been injured by poachers' snares.
- Facilitating the capture, delivery, and release of black rhinos from South Africa to North Luangwa National Park in Zambia by assisting with the veterinary expenses necessary to bring the rhinos safely to the park.
- Supporting the dissemination of environmental education materials, including items specific to white rhinos, to educators in Uganda. This grant supported the distribution of teaching materials and lesson plans to Ugandan teachers and education coordinators at Rhino Fund Uganda.

Rhinoceros & Tiger Conservation Funding History from 1999 through 2007	
Total Number of Grant Proposals Received	796
Total Number of Grants Awarded	357
Percentage of Countries with Rhinoceros and Tigers that Receive Grants	82%
Total Amount Appropriated by U.S. Congress	\$11,149,468
Total Funds Distributed through Grants	\$10,585,924
Total Funds to Administration of Grants	\$563,545
Total Matching/In-kind Funds Leveraged by Grants	\$21,916,982



Amur tiger
WCS/John Goodrich



Greater one-horned rhino
International Rhino Foundation

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
International Affairs
Division of International Conservation
4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Room 100
Arlington, VA 22203
703-358-1754
703-358-2115/fax
internationalconservation@fws.gov
http://www.fws.gov/international
www.fws.gov
CFDA# 15.619

February 2008

