

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. The tiger's beautiful orange pelt commands a high price. 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 creates 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.

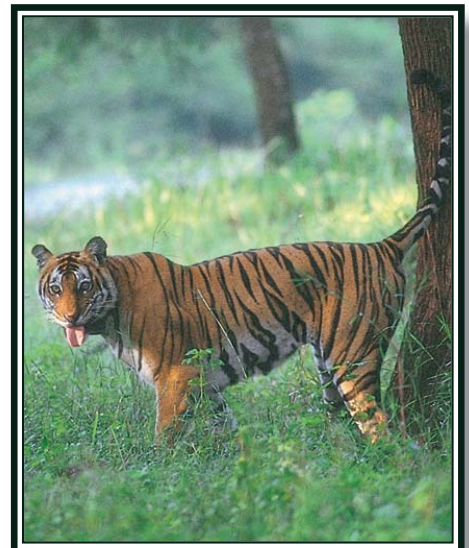
Wild rhinos can still be found in parts of Asia and Africa, but they too live in small fragmented populations which may not be viable (due to lack of breeding opportunities and risk of random events or disease). Sumatran rhinos have decreased by 50 percent in the past 18 years leaving only about 300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

Before 1900, hundreds of thousands 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, 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.



Above: *Black rhinos at Mkomazi National Park, Tanzania* Richard Ruggiero/USFWS
Right: *Young Bengal tigress* © Ullas Karanth/WCS

The 2008 Congressional appropriation of \$1,968,800 million, along with matching funds from host countries and conservation groups, in excess of \$2,674,457 funded 42 vital rhino and tiger conservation projects, including the following efforts:

- Establishing a new water point for rhinos and other wildlife in the Chyulu Hills, southern Kenya. High human and livestock densities outside the conservation area have made it difficult for wildlife to reach the existing natural water point, therefore an artificial one will be constructed and maintained in an area with better protection.
- Assisting with veterinary and flight expenses related to moving desert black rhinos onto community conservancies in Namibia in accordance with their national rhino management strategy, and supporting follow-up monitoring of the rhinos in rugged remote terrain.
- Supporting experienced teams to monitor and secure rhino populations



Sumatran rhino and young

© The Cincinnati Zoo

in southeastern Zimbabwe, and to support the emergency veterinary expenses incurred in capture operations to treat rhinos for snare injuries and other injuries, ear-notching or implanting horn transmitters to aid rhino monitoring, and translocating rhinos in vulnerable areas to places of greater safety.

- The 9th meeting of the African Rhino Specialists to bring together 35 of the most accomplished field practitioners working on rhino conservation management and research, wildlife trade and community program disciplines, in order to share information and expertise and develop future strategies.
- Preparing local people for a practical participatory role in tiger conservation in the tiger range of India's state of Uttaranchal by raising the awareness and knowledge of students, teachers, foresters, forest guards and grassroots communities.
- Expanding and making sustainable the capacity building, conservation awareness and overall project management components of Bangladesh's Sundarbans Tiger Project.
- Continuing tiger and prey population monitoring in Bangladesh's Sundarbans to identify threats, allow evaluation of management strategies, and ensure effective tiger conservation.
- Maintaining regular anti-poaching patrols in key sites of Indonesia's Kerinci Seblat National Park,

pursuing and prosecuting violators, swiftly intervening to mitigate human-tiger conflict, providing on-the-job patrol training to national park rangers, and presenting wildlife crimes investigation and judicial training.

- Collecting data on wildlife crime, assisting enforcement agencies in detecting wildlife crime, and supporting prosecution of apprehended criminals in India.
- Operating anti-poaching units to protect and monitor the Sumatran rhinos in Indonesia's Way Kambas National Park and Javan rhinos in Indonesia's Ujung Kulon National Park.



Eastern black rhino, Laikipia, Kenya

© Brendan Hill/FFI

Rhinoceros & Tiger Conservation Funding History from 2004 through 2008	
Total Number of Grant Proposals Received	373
Total Number of Grants Awarded	201
Percentage of Countries with Rhinoceros and Tigers Receiving Grants	82%
Total Amount Appropriated by U.S. Congress	\$7,983,630
Total Funds Distributed through Grants	\$7,566,371
Total Funds to Administration of Grants	\$417,259
Total Matching/In-kind Funds Leveraged by Grants	\$14,162,082

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

January 2009

