

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, national parks and their corridors. 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.

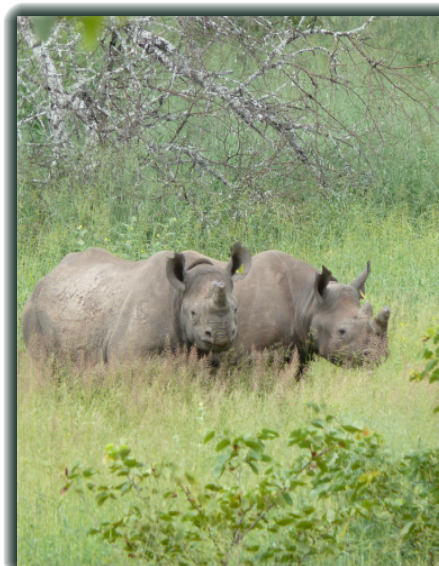
Wild rhinos can still be found in parts of Asia and Africa, but they too live in small fragmented populations which may not be viable (due to lack of breeding opportunities and risk of random events or disease). Sumatran rhinos have decreased by 50 percent in the past 18 years leaving only about 300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



Left: Thai tiger (*Panthera tigris corbetti*) **with prey**

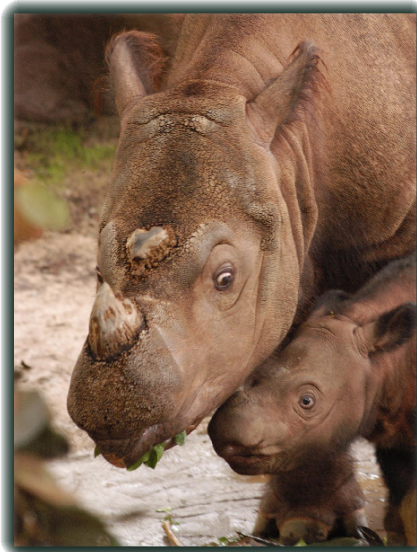
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Right: Southern black rhinos (*Diceros bicornis minor*) **in Zimbabwe**

Michelle Gadd/USFWS

The 2010 Congressional appropriation of \$3 million, along with matching funds from host countries and conservation groups, in excess over \$5 million funded 54 vital rhino and tiger conservation projects, including the following efforts:

- Create an emergency response facility for rhino conservancies in Laikipia District, Kenya. By equipping a rhino capture facility close to rhino populations in Central Kenya with the crates, capture truck, and crane required for emergency rhino operations, we hope to improve response time for veterinarians and capture specialists to reach rhinos in central and northern Kenya when necessary.
- Support anti-poaching and monitoring work by camel patrol to provide security and regular monitoring of the northernmost desert black rhinos and other wildlife in the rugged terrain of Kunene region, Namibia. Activities will include extended patrols, monitoring and observing behavior of individual rhinos, and reporting any human and livestock activity which could adversely affect rhino habitat or security.
- Improve rhino crime investigation and prosecution in Zimbabwe. This project will convene representatives of the police and the judiciary at a workshop taught by rhino field practitioners and lawyers familiar with wildlife policy in order to improve awareness about the plight of the rhino and to provide the assistance necessary to increase the prosecution rate for wildlife crimes.
- Carry out rigorous tiger, prey, and threat assessments in protected areas of India's state of Karnataka (*Dandeli-Anshi Tiger Reserve, Kudremukh-Someshwara Protected Area Complex, and Sharavathi-Mookambika Protected Area Complex*) and support outreach activities to create a constituency that actively favors conservation of tigers and other wildlife.
- Combat poaching of Sumatran tiger and prey species in and around Indonesia's Kerinci Seblat National Park through operating anti-poaching patrols, supporting law enforcement important to tiger conservation, working to mitigate and prevent human-tiger conflict, training rangers in patrolling and wildlife crime investigation, and providing technical advice and mentoring to local NGO partners.
- Develop an integrated conservation education and outreach strategy in support of the Bangladesh Tiger Action Plan (*BTAP*) directed at developing conservation education and outreach strategies to meet the countries need to better inform the public, news media, and decision-makers about tiger conservation.
- Improve effectiveness of Rhino Protection Units in Tabin Wildlife Reserve in Malaysia by enabling units to patrol for at least 15 days per month in areas of highest risk to rhinos, ensuring that no traps are placed or remain long enough to threaten rhinos within the sanctuary, apprehending suspected poachers and forging meaningful links with senior managers of plantations.



Sumatran rhino (*Dicerorhinus sumatrensis*) **and young**
© The Cincinnati Zoo



Rhino guardians at Lowveld Rhino Trust
Michelle Gadd/USFWS

Rhinoceros & Tiger Conservation Funding from 2006 through 2010	
Total Number of Grant Proposals Received	426
Total Number of Grants Awarded	228
Percentage of Countries with Rhinoceros and Tigers Receiving Grants	80%
Total Amount Appropriated by U.S. Congress	\$10,621,720
Total Funds Distributed through Grants	\$10,580,000
Total Funds to Administration of Grants	\$457,259
Total Matching/In-kind Funds Leveraged by Grants	\$18,034,000

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