



ANNUAL REPORT | 2015



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## LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

Since IRF was founded nearly 25 years ago, our work has been firmly focused in areas where rhinos are in the most need of attention and where conservation investments will do the most good. We remain committed to this philosophy and to tackling changing and intensifying rhino conservation challenges head-on.

Highlights of the past year include good evidence that Javan rhinos, found only in Indonesia's Ujung Kulon National Park, seem to be holding their own. Now that there is camera trap coverage across the entire park, we know that there are between 60 and 63 individual animals in the population. We now have the best data ever in hand on this Critically Endangered species, which will be used to develop more effective conservation responses.

Unwavering vigilance by IRF-funded Rhino Protection Units in Ujung Kulon has achieved 'zero rhino poaching' for 18 years, and in Sumatra's Bukit Barisan Selatan and Way Kambas National Parks for the 8th straight year. A young Sumatran rhino male, Harapan, born at the Cincinnati Zoo in 2007, joined the population at the Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary in November, while female Ratu and male Andalas (also born in Cincinnati) are expecting a calf in May 2016.

Thanks to funding from the Disney Conservation Fund, we were able to conduct intensive population analyses and strategic planning for Sumatran rhinos, which, despite protection, continue to decrease in number. A 10-year blueprint for conservation action, generated with partner NGOs and the Indonesian government, is being finalized.

In Assam, Indian Rhino Vision 2020 is entering phase two. A facility in the Burachapori-Laokhowa complex is being prepared to receive at least new six rhinos by the end of

2016. Indian rhinos represent a true conservation success story, recovering from fewer than 200 animals in the early 1900s to more than 3,500 today.

Sadly, the poaching crisis in Africa continues to escalate. The number of rhinos reported poached in Africa has increased for the 6th year in a row to at least 1,342 rhinos in 2015 – the highest level since poaching first began to intensify in 2008. In South Africa, which bears the brunt of the crisis, poaching decreased slightly, from 1,215 in 2014 to 1,175 in 2015. Unfortunately, other countries such as Namibia and Zimbabwe have experienced a poaching surge, losing 90 and 50 animals, respectively, this year. We continue to strategically invest Operation: Stop Poaching Now funds to support southern African rhino populations that we believe are large enough to survive the crisis. We're also providing funds for activities to help reduce the demand in Vietnam, the largest rhino horn consumer.

In Zimbabwe, our partner, the Lowveld Rhino Trust, is engaged in a day-to-day battle to stave off poaching losses, and has built up the black rhino population in that region from 4% of the national total in 1990 to 89% at end December 2015 (about 8% of Africa's continental total). This has been achieved through biological management, strategic translocations of rhinos, support for anti-poaching, informer systems, legal actions against poachers, etc. Much credit for this effort is due to conservancy members and their staff, operating under difficult economic and political conditions.

Fortunately, there is also good news in Africa – IRF and our partner, Wilderness Safaris, established a new founder population in Botswana's Okavango Delta. In 2015, an additional 14 animals were moved to the area,



bringing the total number of translocated animals to 38. Three births, one in 2014 and two in 2015, give great hope that the upward growth trend will continue.

In the United States, our program office moved to a 'real' office this year in Strasburg, VA, a big change from staff working remotely for the past 20 years! We welcomed a new Development Director, Alexandra Hausler, in March, who joins our small but dynamic US-based team.

The International Rhino Foundation works in some of the most difficult places in the world, for better or for worse, and we intend to go the distance. Bolstered by the unwavering commitment of our donors, friends, board, staff, and partners, even in the face of enormous challenges, we are optimistic that we will continue to have a positive impact on the future of these magnificent creatures. Thank you for your generous support and for your belief in what we do.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susie Ellis".

Susie Ellis, PhD  
Executive Director



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Lukas".

John Lukas  
President

## STATE OF THE RHINO

### JAVAN RHINO

(*RHINOCEROS SONDAICUS*)

CRITICALLY ENDANGERED

60-63

POPULATION STABLE

Javan rhinos survive only in Indonesia's Ujung Kulon National Park, where updated population estimates are based on video camera trap data that have been verified by the IUCN Asian Rhino Specialist Group. The highest conservation priorities for saving the Javan rhino from extinction include continuing protection, expanding rhino habitat within the Javan Rhino Study and Conservation Area in the eastern portion of Ujung Kulon, managing habitat within the core portion of the park, and identifying a suitable translocation site for establishing a second population.

### SUMATRAN RHINO

(*DICERORHINUS SUMATRENSIS*)

CRITICALLY ENDANGERED

<100

POPULATION DECREASING

As few as 100 Sumatran rhinos survive as fragmented populations in Indonesia's Bukit Barisan Selatan, Gunung Leuser and Way Kambas National Parks, and a

small population has recently been found in central Kalimantan. The Sumatran rhino was recently declared extinct in the wild in Malaysia. Small population effects, such as reduced reproduction, human encroachment into rhino habitat, and the ever-present danger of poaching remain the most serious threats. The most critical actions are to protect and consolidate existing populations, to increase public awareness, and to expand the managed breeding program.

### GREATER ONE-HORNED RHINO

(*RHINOCEROS UNICORNIS*)

VULNERABLE

>3,500

POPULATION SLOWLY INCREASING

Thanks to ongoing protection, the greater one-horned rhino population now numbers more than 3,500 animals in India and Nepal. More than 2,625 rhinos are found in Kaziranga, Manas, and Orang National Parks, and the Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary in India's state of Assam. More than 280 individuals also live in protected areas in Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, and more than 640 remain in Nepal, where the country celebrated more than three consecutive years of no poaching.

Poaching is still a problem in Assam, where 20 animals were killed this year, a decrease from 30 in 2014 and 40 in 2013.

### BLACK RHINO

(*DICEROS BICORNIS*)

CRITICALLY ENDANGERED

5,040-5,458

POPULATION SLOWLY INCREASING

Black rhinos are at continued risk from the African poaching crisis, particularly in South Africa. Despite this, thanks to intensive anti-poaching efforts, black rhino numbers remain relatively stable or are slowly increasing as reproduction slightly offsets both natural mortality and poaching losses. Presently, the species occurs in nine countries: the Republic of South Africa, Namibia, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Zambia, Malawi, Swaziland, and Botswana. The highest priorities for safeguarding this species are maximizing anti-poaching activities, and maintaining intensive monitoring and active management of wild populations.

### WHITE RHINO

(*CERATOTHERIUM SIMUM*)

NEAR THREATENED

19,666-21,085

POPULATION POSSIBLY DECREASING

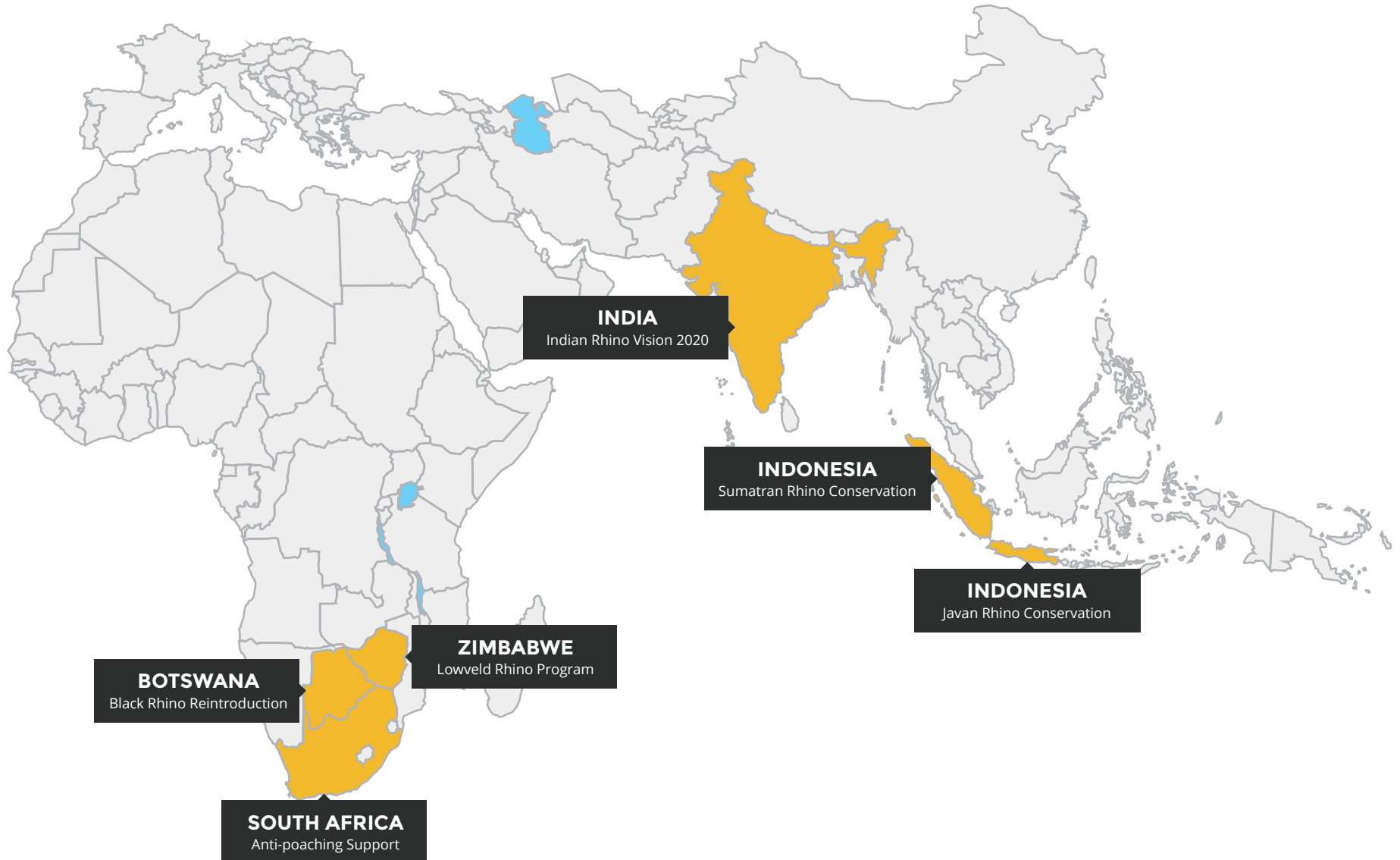
In the face of the poaching crisis, white rhino populations still remain relatively stable. White rhinos occur in eight countries - South Africa, Namibia, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Swaziland, Uganda, and Kenya. South Africa holds more than 90% of world population. In 2015, more than 1,175 rhinos were slaughtered in South Africa; the majority were white rhinos. While this was a slight reduction from the 1,215 lost in 2014, continent-wide the numbers increased to at least 1,305. The highest priority for ensuring this species' survival is to step-up protection efforts, especially for the largest populations, and placing international pressure on range country governments to enforce their wildlife crime laws.







## WHERE IRF WORKS





## HOW IRF WORKS

Throughout its 24-year history, the International Rhino Foundation has supported and managed rhino conservation projects in Africa and Asia. Our small, US-based staff works hard to make sure that every donation counts - and more than 85 percent of contributions go directly to field programs. Our commitment to careful spending earned us a 4-star rating by Charity Navigator, America's largest charity evaluator, which provides millions of donors with the information needed to make informed and wise donations. Among the **82 wildlife conservation non-profits evaluated by Charity Navigator, IRF ranks in the top ten** for fiscal accountability and transparency.

In addition to fiscal responsibility, IRF's core values - hard work, optimism, partnership, and passion - are at the heart of everything we do.

### HARD WORK

Successful conservation takes hard, sometimes back-breaking work. Anti-poaching and monitoring teams on the ground give their all to make sure that their charges survive. In Zimbabwe, for example, Lowveld Rhino Trust trackers may walk for a week through thick, thorny brush to make sure a missing rhino is alive and well. In Indonesia, Rhino Protection Units carry 50-pound packs, containing all their food and supplies, for 15 days straight every month through the dense rainforest. These men also brave dangers posed by many wild animals, including predators.

### OPTIMISM

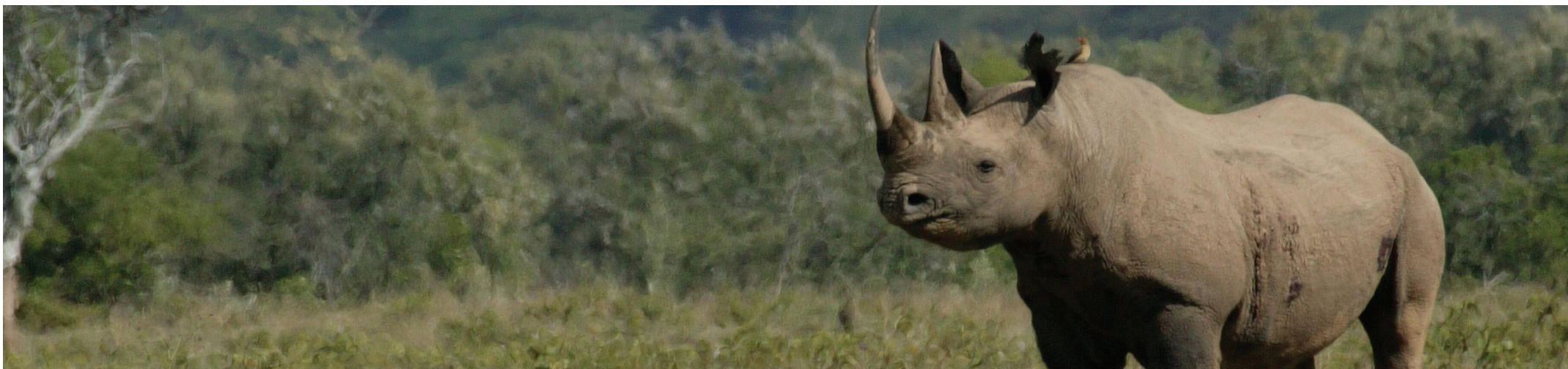
Our teams couldn't achieve what they do without underlying optimism. Through good days and bad days, we believe that together, through hard work, partnership, passion, and careful investment of precious resources where they are most needed, we will ensure that rhinos survive for future generations.

### PARTNERSHIP

IRF recognizes that there is more work to do to save rhinos than one person or organization can ever accomplish in a lifetime. Therefore, we have partnered with like-minded people and truly exceptional organizations to work together towards our mutual goal of saving rhinos. Every group with which we work has different strengths and something to offer - if we can build on those strengths, together we can get the job done.

### PASSION

We love what we do. Period. All of us at IRF are passionate about rhinos, with a 24-year track record of helping them to survive under some of the most difficult circumstances on Earth. We stand strong in our belief that our work is making a difference.





## NEW BLACK RHINO POPULATION ESTABLISHED IN BOTSWANA

Building on the work started in 2013, IRF, with our partner Wilderness Safaris, established a new founder population of black rhinos in Botswana's Okavango Delta. Over the last three years, 38 rhinos were flown from South Africa and Zimbabwe to the Delta. In 2015, the final 14 animals were transferred, a process which required six different airlifts by the Botswana Defense Force. This commitment of state resources and a solid public-private partnership is one of the remarkable aspects of this project.

This founder population of 38 animals stands an excellent chance of succeeding and remaining genetically viable for the long-term. Births from previous years' translocations – one in 2014 and two in 2015 – give hope that an upward growth trend will continue.

To safeguard this newly established population, the partners will continue monitoring and protecting what is now a significant population of black rhinos. Botswana's national support for rhino conservation continues with the Minister of Environment, Wildlife and Tourism securing funds to support recruiting, equipping, and training a new "rhino squad," whose sole responsibility will be to protect and monitor the country's rhino populations. The squad will work closely with Wilderness Safaris' rhino monitoring team, the Department of Wildlife and National Parks Anti-Poaching Unit, and the Botswana Defence Force.

IRF thanks the Tiffany & Co. Foundation, the Houston Zoo, Cleveland MetroParks Zoo, Taronga Conservation Society Australia, and a number of private donors who have generously supported these moves.



ereck de la Harpe - Wilderness Safaris









## ZIMBABWE – WORKING TO SAVE BLACK RHINOS

The Lowveld Rhino Trust (LRT), our on-the-ground partner in Zimbabwe, undertakes rhino conservation activities in the Lowveld, concentrating efforts in Save Valley Conservancy and Bubye Valley Conservancy in the southeast portion of the country. Their activities help maintain a positive environment - in terms of habitat, land-use, stakeholder attitudes, and other key factors - for the long-term growth of populations of black and white rhinos, while also tackling immediate conservation needs such as population monitoring, management, protection, and raising awareness in local communities.

The program utilizes biological management, strategic translocations and de-horning, proactive protection, informant systems, legal actions against poachers, and other measures. These have paid off enormously – the Lowveld's black rhino population has grown from 4% of the national total in 1990 to 89% at end December 2015 (about 8% of Africa's total). These efforts can be credited to conservancy members and staff operating under difficult economic and political conditions. Unplanned settlement under Zimbabwe's "fast-track" resettlement program has led to a significant loss of rhino habitat in the conservancies but, nonetheless, the available land can still provide room for more than twice the current populations of both rhino species.

The Lowveld faces major challenges from ongoing encroachment by settlers and financial instability resulting from a number of government policies. The Lowveld Rhino Trust works closely with community leaders to identify and promote opportunities for community and conservancy joint ventures that will provide for rhino conservation while also conforming to the government's land reform policy, which has seen some private conservancy lands recently turned over to local people.

Sadly, rhino poaching increased in Zimbabwe this year, with 50 rhinos poached in Lowveld conservancies, compared to 20 in 2014. Fortunately, Save Valley and Bubye Valley Conservancies saw 26 black rhinos and nine white rhinos born this year.

The IRF stands fast in its commitment to the long-term support of the Lowveld Rhino Trust, despite the significant challenges faced due to unpredictable socio-political and economic change.









## OPERATION: STOP POACHING NOW

First launched in 2010, our Operation: STOP POACHING NOW campaign funds targeted projects that help to mitigate rhino poaching in southern Africa, ranging from increased 'boots on the ground' to community engagement. In 2014-2015, you generously provided more than \$225,000 to provide much-needed funding to high-priority anti-poaching projects in southern Africa. We're building on strengths – focusing on supporting larger populations that we believe stand the greatest chance of surviving the current poaching crisis

### VIETNAM

Education for Nature (ENV) focuses on reducing the demand for rhino horn in the largest rhino consumer state: Vietnam. Through public events, mass media (TV, radio, media articles, and internet) and consumer-targeted initiatives, ENV seeks to persuade Vietnamese consumers to stop using rhino horn by affirming that it does not have any medical value and that money spent to buy horn supports the killing of rhinos in other countries.

Investment: \$30,000

### ZIMBABWE

In addition to partially supporting rhino protection and monitoring in Zimbabwe's Lowveld, your gifts helped to upgrade and consolidate the existing digital radio network in Gonarezhou National Park, ensuring that secure communication is possible throughout the entire park.

Investment: \$92,450

### SOUTH AFRICA

With the ever-present danger of poaching in North Zululand's Phinda Private Game Reserve, rhinos are at high risk. Your gifts provided funding to the Nyathi Anti-Poaching Unit (APU), whose 200 staff protect key rhino populations in the area and coordinates responses of neighboring reserves to poaching incursions. Investment: \$50,450

### STOPRHINOPOACHING.COM

Your critical gifts provided core support for this small but dynamic NGO that supports rangers, anti-poaching units, canine units, security teams, and protected area managers – the thin green line that stands between poachers and rhinos' safety.

Investment: \$18,000

We will provide additional funding to well-deserving southern African projects next year.









## INDIAN RHINO VISION 2020

This year, the greater-one horned rhinos in Assam's Manas National Park enjoyed a year of safety – the first without poaching since 2011. Under the ambitious Indian Rhino Vision 2020, IRF and our partners have translocated 18 animals to the park, which lost its rhino population during a period of civil conflict in the late 1990s. Another eight rescued, hand-reared animals were moved to Manas by another organization. Sadly, eight of the IRV 2020 rhinos have been killed since reintroduction efforts began in 2008. Fourteen calves were born during the same period, including one born in December 2015 to one of the original females moved to Manas; the calf was sired by a male lost to poaching in 2014.

In early 2015, IRF, with the Government of Assam, WWF, and the IUCN Asian Rhino and Conservation Breeding Specialist Groups, convened a meeting to determine actions needed to ensure the long-term success of the IRV 2020. We wanted to know if the population could survive under current poaching pressure, and if not, how many rhinos needed to be moved into the park to keep the population viable. Finally, we discussed ways to ameliorate known threats as well as unforeseen events. Like other small populations, the Manas rhinos simply cannot tolerate poaching, no matter how many animals we move to offset the losses. IRV 2020 partners will continue closely monitoring the situation in Manas, and urge government action.

Phase II of Indian Rhino Vision 2020 is racing ahead, with the first translocations planned for Spring 2016 – at least six greater one-horned rhinos will be moved from Kaziranga National Park to the Laokhowa-Burachapori Wildlife Sanctuary. IRV 2020 partners have constructed a large pen at the site, where the animals will settle in for at least 6-10 months before being released into the sanctuary. As part of the preparation for the translocations, with funding from our partner Save the Rhino, IRF has provided funds to Aaranyak, an Assamese NGO, to create a small grants program for local NGOs in the area to create community development, awareness, and livelihoods programs.









## SUMATRAN RHINO SANCTUARY: CENTER OF EXCELLENCE FOR A SPECIES IN CRISIS

With fewer than 100 Sumatran rhinos left on the planet, IRF continues to work with our implementing partner, Yayasan Badak Indonesia (YABI or the Rhino Foundation of Indonesia) to develop the Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary in Way Kambas National Park, Sumatra, as a center of excellence for the species. The SRS currently holds six rhinos (including Harapan, see his story at right). Plans are in the works to double the size of the facility in the next few years and to add a new quarantine facility so that we can bring new animals to the site while ensuring the health of the existing population. The Sanctuary is staffed with Indonesian veterinarians and keepers with unique expertise in care and breeding of this rare species. Building on the successful birth of the male Andatu in 2012, sired by Andalas, who was born at the Cincinnati Zoo, the SRS will welcome a new calf in May 2016. Veterinarians are closely monitoring cow Ratu with weekly ultrasounds as her pregnancy progresses.

### Harapan Moves to Indonesia

In November 2015, nine-year-old male Harapan, born at the Cincinnati Zoo, was successfully transferred from Cincinnati to the Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary.

Harapan was met at the Jakarta International Airport by an SRS team after his 2-day international voyage. The team escorted him during the final leg of his journey, including a chartered ferry trip across the Sunda Straights and a late-night truck ride to the Sanctuary. Arriving around 3:00 am, Harapan calmly backed out of his crate and immediately began drinking and eating – he particularly seemed to relish local browse.

After a six-week quarantine period, Harapan moved to a one-acre temporary pen while his permanent paddock was completed. Harapan quickly adapted to his new environment, has captured the hearts of his new keepers, and has slowly started gaining weight. Construction of his new paddock is nearly completed.









## GOOD NEWS FOR JAVAN RHINOS

Our implementing partner, Yayasan Badak Indonesia (YABI) has completed the 12,355-acre Javan Rhino Study and Conservation Area (JRSCA) in the Gunung Honge area, along Ujung Kulon National Park's eastern boundary. Since the project's inception, 193 acres of the invasive *Arenga obtusifolia* palm have been cleared, removing a canopy species that inhibits vegetative growth on the forest floor and allowing native rhino food plants to recolonize. To date, more than 150 people from surrounding communities have been hired to cut-and-clear the palms, to build four guard posts as well as a base camp, and to construct nearly five miles of perimeter fence to prevent disease that might be spread from local cattle, up to ten Javan rhinos now are using this newly-restored habitat!

To protect the rhinos using the newly expanded area, a new Rhino Protection Unit was hired in early 2015. Five four-man RPUs now protect the 253,530-acre park - the largest expanse of lowland tropical forest on the island of Java.





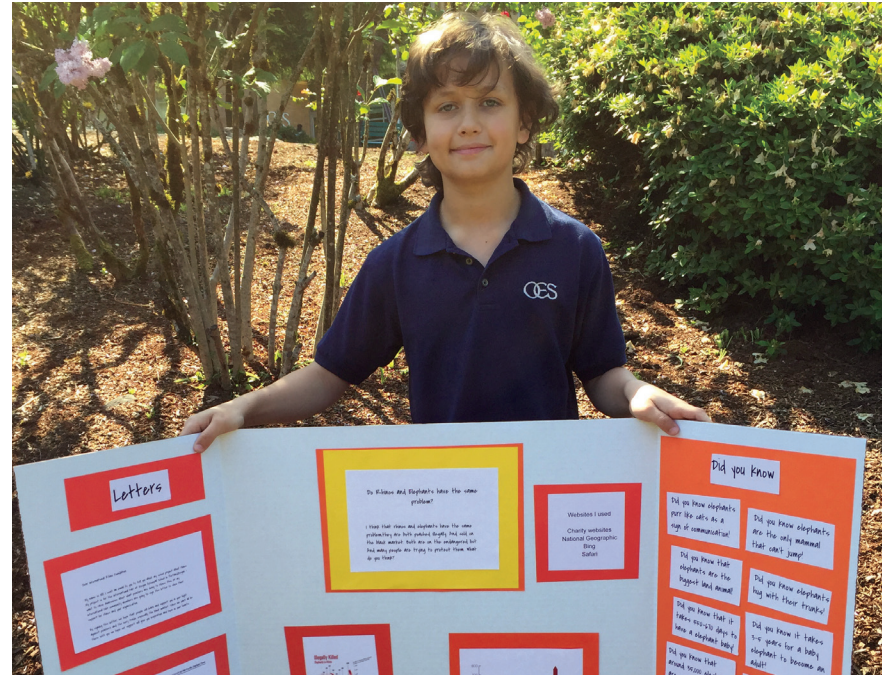
## YOUNG CONSERVATIONISTS: KIDS HELPING RHINOS

IRF is proud to be supported by rhino conservationists of all ages. These terrific youngsters may some day hold the future of rhinos in their hands. Here are some young rhino supporters:

Andatu's keepers hold up a copy of *One Special Rhino*, a children's book written and illustrated by the fifth graders of P.S. 107 John W Kimball Learning Center in Brooklyn, New York.

Will, from Oregon, did a school report on black and white rhinos and collected signatures in support of IRF at a school fair.

Milagro, from Texas, asked for attendees of her 3rd birthday party to support IRF. She raised more than \$300!





## CORPORATE AND ARTIST PARTNERS

The International Rhino Foundation is grateful to our many unique corporate and artist partners who contributed to the IRF in 2015. From providing valuable communications support to donating proceeds from one-of-a-kind works of art, IRF's partners are as diverse as the five rhino species we work to conserve.

### 2015 CORPORATE PARTNERS



### 2015 ARTIST PARTNERS



Brandon Martin



Tom Tischler



Rebecca Barnes



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IRF's work is only possible because of the generous support of our donors. Thank You!

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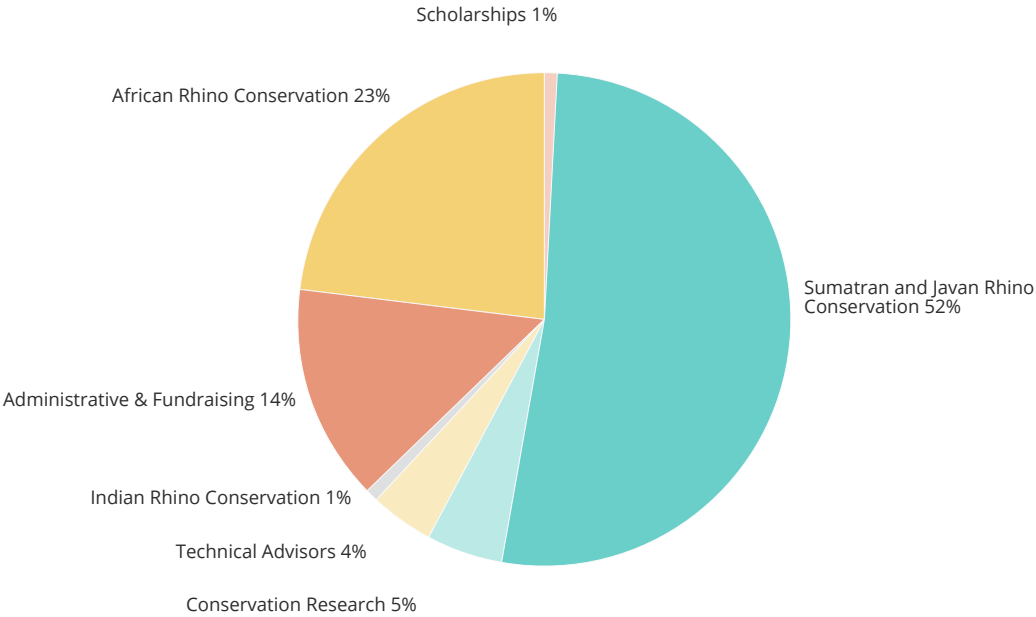
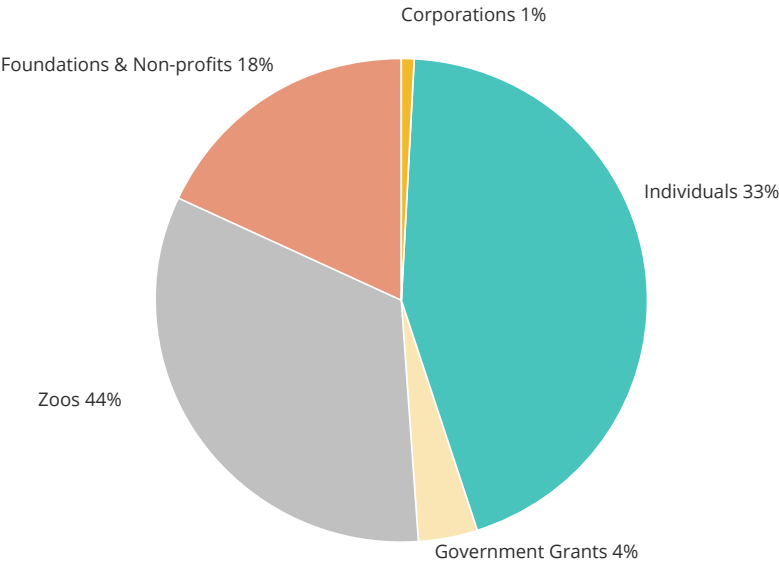
FINANCIALS

2015 REVENUE

Individuals	\$791,766
Foundations & Non-profits	\$415,531
Corporations	\$20,012
Zoos	\$1,031,262
Government Grants	\$97,037
IRF Store	\$20,384
Team Rhino	\$1,852
TOTAL NEW REVENUE	\$2,377,844
Salter Mitchell In-Kind Contribution	\$86,000
Interest Income	\$3
TOTAL REVENUE	\$2,463,847

2015 EXPENSES

African Rhino Conservation	\$475,926
Zimbabwe Black Rhino Conservation	\$266,786
Zimbabwe Black Rhino Special Projects	\$75,580
Southern Africa Anti-poaching	\$123,147
Botswana Black Rhino Translocations	\$8,757
Black Rhino Repatriation	\$1,656
Indian Rhino Conservation	\$30,371
Indian Rhino Vision 2020	\$30,371
Sumatran & Javan Rhino Conservation	\$1,085,484
Sumatran Rhino Conservation	\$838,052
Javan Rhino Conservation	\$247,432
Conservation Research	\$110,023
Technical Advisors	\$79,322
Scholarships	\$22,951
TOTAL PROGRAM EXPENSES	\$1,804,077
Administration & Fundraising	\$293,143
Professional Services	\$43,326
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$2,140,546







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