



INTERNATIONAL  
**RHINO**  
FOUNDATION



# ANNUAL REPORT 2020



# 2020 RHINO HIGHLIGHTS



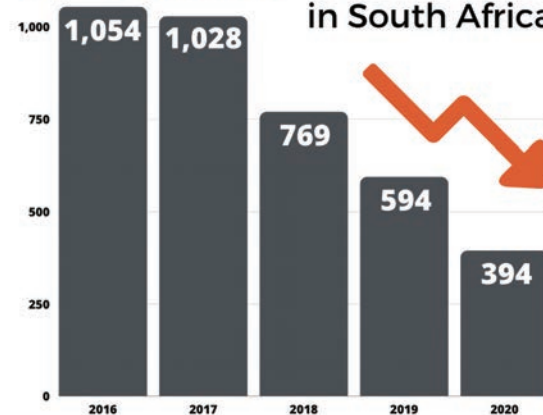
More than **22,000**  
**seedlings planted**  
in Way Kambas  
National Park



**Nina Fascione**  
joined the  
International Rhino Foundation  
as **executive director**



Poaching declined **33%**  
in South Africa



courtesy of Stop Rhino Poaching

Reserve Relief Fund  
awarded **11 grants**



in emergency support to  
organizations across southern Africa

Two greater one-horned  
**rhinos translocated**  
to Manas National Park in India,



bringing population to 44



Indian Rhino Vision 2020



courtesy of Lowveld Rhino Trust

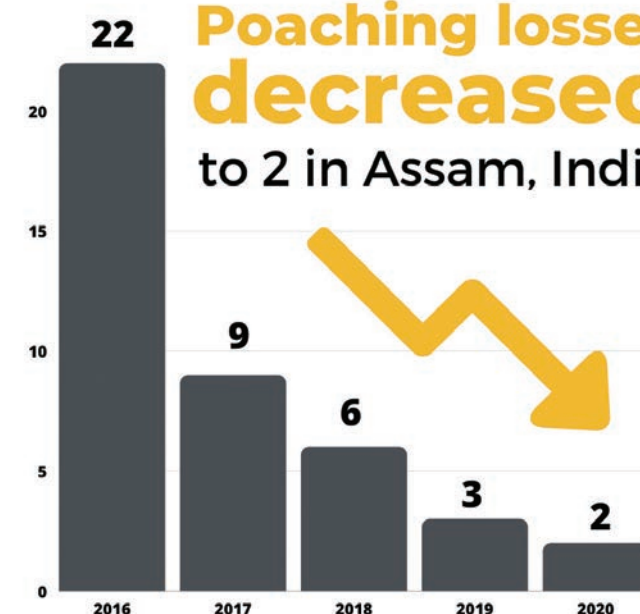
With at least 19 rhino births,  
the Buby Valley Conservancy  
**rhino population in Zimbabwe**  
**grew 6.1%**



Javan **marine patrol**  
**disrupted 220**  
illegal fishing operations  
in first year

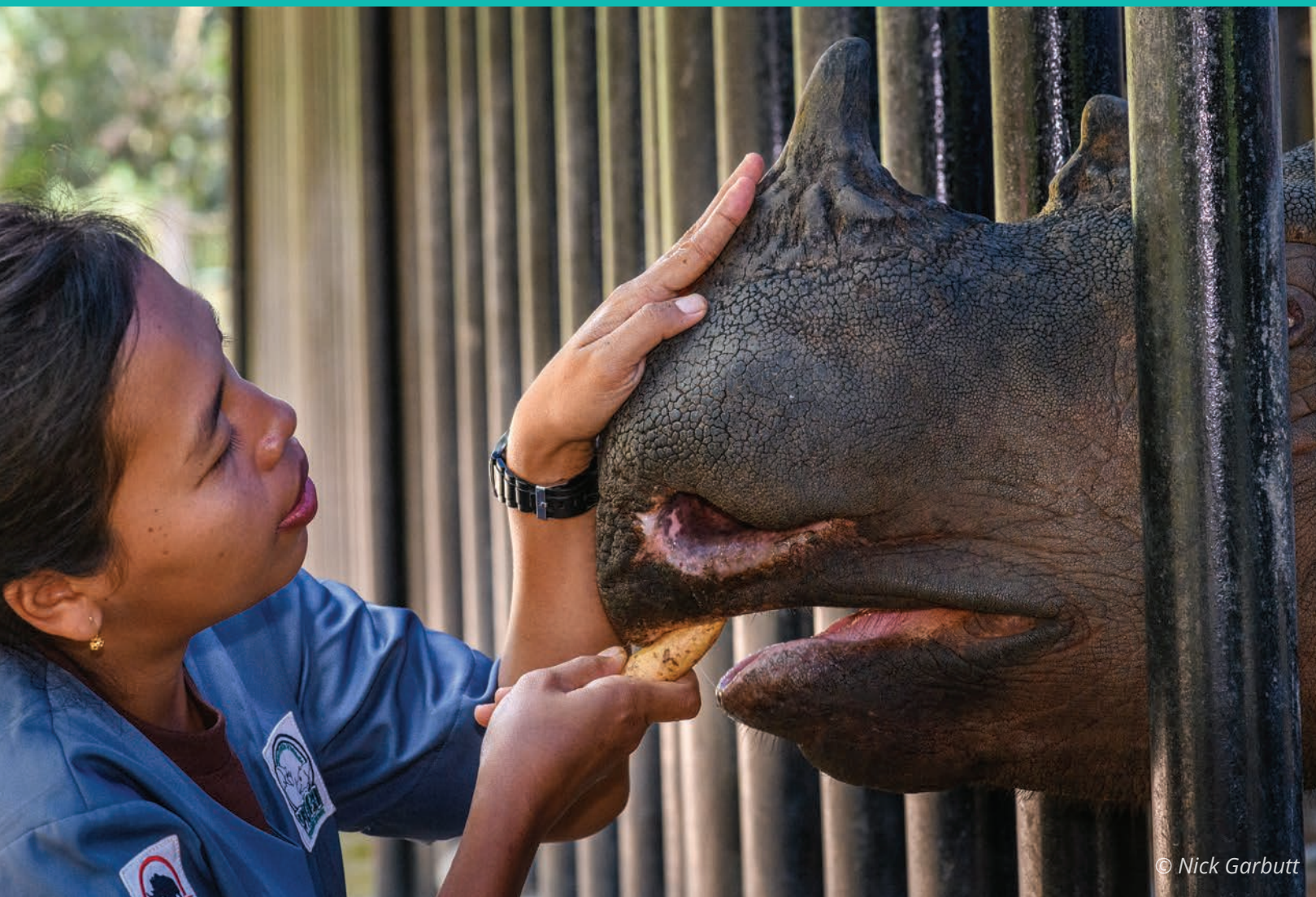


Poaching losses  
**decreased**  
to 2 in Assam, India





# THE INTERNATIONAL RHINO FOUNDATION



© Nick Garbutt

Our **VISION**  
is a world where  
**rhinos thrive**  
in the wild.

Our **MISSION** is to  
ensure the survival of rhinos  
through strategic partnerships,  
targeted protection, and  
scientifically sound interventions.

## LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

For all of us, 2020 was a challenging year, as we navigated the devastating impact of the global pandemic. Despite the many changes, impediments and difficulties, we are proud to report that the International Rhino Foundation (IRF) remained steadfast in our mission to protect rhinos.

Our staff and partners worked harder than ever during the crisis. Because of their passion and dedication, we were able to respond to emergency needs and maintain crucial activities, while not losing sight of long-term rhino conservation goals.

We also thank you. Your tremendous support throughout the year had a direct impact, helping rhinos survive and thrive. Because of your generosity, IRF was able to react quickly to changing circumstances, providing critical support for rangers, local communities, and our on-the-ground partners. With your help, we created the Reserve Relief Fund, responding to urgent requests from game reserves and parks facing severe budget shortfalls as the result of the loss of tourism income in southern Africa. The Fund has now awarded more than \$260,000 in grants to help pay staff salaries and overtime, purchase health and safety equipment, and keep rhino protection units in the field.

We are happy to report that poaching declined in most areas in 2020, thanks in part to COVID related shutdowns, but also because protection and monitoring teams remained on the ground to protect rhinos, thanks to your support.

At the Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary, staff from our partner organization, Yayasan Badak Indonesia, increased safety protocols. We are happy to report that all seven rhinos are healthy, and even gained weight last year. (As an added COVID safety protocol, staff started triple-washing browse, which apparently, the rhinos loved!) IRF continues to work with the Indonesian government and our Sumatran Rhino Rescue partners to survey and eventually capture and translocate Sumatran rhinos to breed this critically endangered species.

Though many of our original plans for 2020 were delayed or altered, we are proud of the resilience of our staff and partners, and other conservationists around the world who found ways to overcome the myriad of obstacles presented by the pandemic. The lessons learned and successes gained this year will serve us well into the future.

We share a collective hope with you that 2021 will be a better year, and we know that no matter what lies ahead, we will meet it together. Thank you again Team Rhino for your support, ensuring that the five species of rhinos thrive for future generations.

Sincerely,



**JOHN LUKAS**  
President

*John Lukas*



**NINA FASCIONE**  
Executive Director

*Nina Fascione*



# STATE OF THE RHINO



**JAVAN RHINO** *Rhinoceros sondaicus*  
**CRITICALLY ENDANGERED 70 - 74; POPULATION STABLE**

Javan rhinos exist only in Indonesia's Ujung Kulon National Park, where they are safeguarded by IRF-supported terrestrial and marine Rhino Protection Units. IRF's program of controlling the growth of the ubiquitous *Arenga obtusifolia*, a palm that chokes out rhino food plants, helps to increase available habitat.



**SUMATRAN RHINO** *Dicerorhinus sumatrensis*  
**CRITICALLY ENDANGERED < 80; POPULATION DECREASING**

There are fewer than 80 Sumatran rhinos in three small populations on Sumatra in Bukit Barisan Selatan, Gunung Leuser and Way Kambas National Parks, plus a handful of animals in central Kalimantan. Priorities for the species include continued protection as well as capturing and translocating animals to conservation breeding facilities such as the IRF-funded Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary in Way Kambas.



**GREATER ONE-HORNED RHINO** *Rhinoceros unicornis*  
**VULNERABLE > 3,600; POPULATION INCREASING**

Strict protection and conservation measures have led to an increase of more than 3,600 greater one-horned rhinos in India and Nepal. The majority of the population resides in Kaziranga, Manas, and Orang National Parks, and the Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary in Assam. Poaching losses decreased to only two deaths in 2020. Overcrowding, invasive species, and poaching remain threats.



**BLACK RHINO** *Diceros bicornis*  
**CRITICALLY ENDANGERED 5,366 - 5,627; POPULATION STABLE**

The black rhino, which is found primarily in southern and east Africa, is slowly recovering from horrendous losses. By 1993, fewer than 2,300 rhinos remained from populations of more than 65,000 in the 1970s. Today, black rhino numbers have increased to more than 5,600 animals. Poaching remains the largest threat. The majority of the population is in South Africa, Namibia, Kenya and Zimbabwe.



**WHITE RHINO** *Ceratotherium simum*  
**NEAR THREATENED 17,212 - 18,915; POPULATION DECREASING**

Over the past three years, the white rhino population has declined after ten years of increases. More than 90% of the population is found in South Africa, with other significant populations in Namibia, Kenya and Zimbabwe. It is critical that range countries intensify protection and enforce their wildlife crime laws to combat the continued poaching crisis.

# WHERE WE WORK

More than 81% of IRF's funds go directly to local staff and partners who implement rhino conservation programs in India, Indonesia, Zimbabwe, South Africa, eSwatini, Zambia and Vietnam.



## IRF focuses program support in six key areas:



**PROTECTION**



**COMMUNITY SUPPORT**

**CONSERVATION BREEDING**



**RESEARCH**



**HABITAT RESTORATION**



**DEMAND REDUCTION**



# WE ARE STRONGER WITH YOU

## Turning Love Into Action

Carved wooden rhinos decorate the shelves of Doug Greenburg's Washington, DC house. His sister knew of his love for rhinos, and began giving them to him as gifts. "But I realized one day that though it is nice to have a carved rhino on your mantle, it wasn't helping the plight of rhinos in the wild," says Greenburg.

Looking to make a difference for rhinos, Greenburg's research led him to the International Rhino Foundation (IRF).

*"I am fortunate to be in a position to make contributions and work together with IRF to protect critically endangered species from poachers."*

Greenburg believes that by working together with local communities living near reserves, we can ensure rhinos thrive in the wild. "My hope is we can get rhinos to a point where they are stable and sustainable so future generations will have the opportunity to see these magnificent creatures in the wild."



## Impactful Returns

Michelle McTigue was interested in conservation from an early age. She participated in a school exchange program that sent her to Zimbabwe. "I immediately fell in love with Zimbabwe, its people and its wildlife," she recalls. "I wanted to support work with local communities while also supporting wildlife conservation."

McTigue, a pharmaceutical chemist for Pfizer, was looking to maximize her contributions to make the most difference. She chose to donate some of her long-held Pfizer stock to IRF, saving the 15% capital gains tax, and providing the full value to charity. Pfizer also matched her donation, doubling her impact.

"I like a good deal and my contribution to IRF goes further in Zimbabwe," she says. "It is not okay for a majestic species to go extinct, and the efforts and investments made are going to the lengths necessary to save a species."



## WAYS TO GIVE

- Donate Online or by Mail
- Become a Monthly Donor
- Donate Stocks or Securities
- Give Through Your Donor Advised Fund
- Give Through Your Will or Trust
- Match Your Gift Through Your Employer
- Start Your Own Fundraiser
- Shop the Rhino Store
- Adopt a Rhino

# REMEMBERING WIDODO RAMONO

All of us at IRF were heartbroken to learn in December that Widodo Ramono, executive director of Yayasan Badak Indonesia (YABI), the Rhino Foundation of Indonesia, passed away on December 24, 2020 after a short illness. Few people have dedicated more years to the study and conservation of Asian rhinos.

Pak Widodo served as YABI's executive director since 2009, stewarding the organization's role in the protection of Indonesia's rhinos. YABI is IRF's principal partner in programs that are helping to ensure the survival of both Sumatran and Javan rhinos.

Widodo held a variety of civil servant positions in wildlife conservation, including serving as the head of Nature Protection and Conservation of Ujung Kulon National Park, which now holds the world's only population of Javan rhinos. His lengthy career also included the management of Asian elephant populations in southern Sumatra and the development of three new Indonesian national parks (Bukit Barisan Selatan, Kerinci Seblat and Way Kambas). As the former Director of Biodiversity Conservation for the Ministry of Forestry, he played a major role in establishing management practices for Indonesia's national parks, nature and game reserves, recreation forests and wetlands.

In 2015, Widodo was awarded the Sir Peter Scott Award for Conservation Merit by the Species Survival Commission of IUCN in recognition of his lifetime's work to save Javan and Sumatran rhinos from extinction.

IRF asked Pak Widodo's colleagues to help us remember him:

*Be it a keeper, a food collector in the field, a government minister or a CEO, Pak Widodo always listened carefully to all input and ideas in any discussion. I remember him saying, "to lead is to listen."*  
- Adi Susmianto, Chairman of the YABI Board of Management

*I will always remember what he said to me that "people who can win are the people who are the master in the field." I have lost a great man, mentor and a lovely friend.*  
- Sectionov, IRF Indonesia Program Manager



*Whenever we were in the field Pak Widodo would change from his suit to his field clothes and wear a goofy looking hat and just smile. When in the forest, among the rhinos, he was the happiest.*  
- John Lukas, President of the IRF Board of Directors

*We have lost a dear friend and the world has lost a great champion for rhinos.*  
- Nina Fascione, IRF's executive director

*For the past decade, I worked together with Widodo to save Indonesia's rhinos. One of his greatest joys was hiking in the rain forest - he knew every plant and animal and was generous in sharing his knowledge. This generous and kind man is severely missed.*  
- Susie Ellis, retired executive director of IRF





# OUR PROGRAMS



## GREATER ONE-HORNED RHINOS

### Habitat Management is an Ongoing Effort for India's Rhinos

With the success of a collaborative effort by forestry officials and police forces to decrease poaching in Assam, India, only two rhinos were lost to poachers in 2020, a tremendous decline since the peak of poaching in 2014. Now, habitat management is increasingly becoming essential to maintain the welcome population growth of greater one-horned rhinos.

Greater one-horned rhinos have rebounded to more than 3,600 individuals in India and Nepal from less than 100 at the beginning of the 20th century. Improving current habitats as well as establishing new habitats for rhinos is a long term project for IRF and our partners.

Invasive plant species have taken hold in the grassland habitats that rhinos depend on in India and Nepal, where

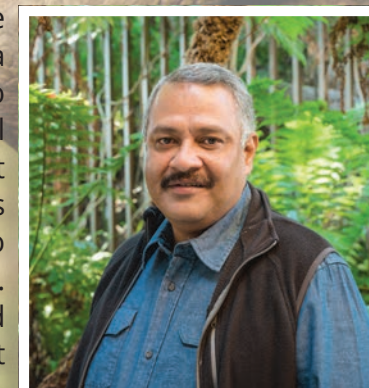
they are rapidly spreading and choking out rhino food plants. As a result, officials in both countries report that rhinos are moving to different, potentially more dangerous, areas to find better food sources.

In India's Manas National Park, IRF funds community-led invasive species removal and replanting of areas with new grass plants to ensure rhinos will have enough food and that the parks will be able to support growing rhino populations. This project is being implemented by on-the-ground partner Aaranyak, and Manas National Park officials.

In addition to invasive species control, Aaranyak works with government officials and local communities to remove grazing cows from Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary to reduce the impact on grasslands for wildlife in the area.

### Rahul Dutta Receives Disney Conservation Hero Award

Rahul Dutta, IRF's intelligence specialist, was honored with a 2020 Disney Conservation Hero Award. The award recognizes local citizens for their commitment to save wildlife, protect habitats and inspire their communities to take part in conservation efforts. Recipients from around the world were nominated by nonprofit environmental organizations, and each honoree and his or her nominating organization will share a \$1,500 award from the Disney Conservation Fund. Dutta works with forestry officials, local and national police, and judiciary officials in Assam, India to help increase the success of wildlife crime arrests and prosecutions through training and other activities.



## Indian Rhino Vision 2020

In 2005, the Indian Rhino Vision 2020 (IRV2020) program was established to increase the greater one-horned rhino population in Assam to 3,000 by establishing populations in new areas. Thanks to this initiative, rhinos are now found in four Protected Areas in Assam: Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary, Rajiv Gandhi Orang National Park, Kaziranga National Park, and Manas National Park.

Though planning was delayed due to COVID-19 restrictions in 2020, partners, including the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), the Bodo Territorial Council, and representatives of the Government of Assam, are currently developing a strategy for the next five years and beyond.



*The final translocation under IRV2020 was scheduled to take place in Spring of 2020, but was postponed to 2021 due to the global pandemic.*



# SUMATRAN RHINOS

## Signs of Change in Sumatra's Way Kambas National Park

In June 2020, the International Rhino Foundation asked supporters from around the world to plant a tree in the rainforests of Way Kambas National Park in Sumatra, Indonesia for just \$1 - or to plant an entire acre for \$1,000. Team Rhino responded with \$25,000 in donations, which was matched by a generous IRF board member, replanting 50 acres to create new habitat for critically endangered Sumatran rhinos.

IRF, our local partner Yayasan Badak Indonesia (YABI) and Way Kambas park officials are working together to replant two sites. Mr. Rusdianto, coordinator and supervisor for the forest farmer group in Way Kambas National Park, recommended involving the local community in the reforestation effort. Local farmers were hired to grow the new seedlings to replant the site.

In 2020, more than 22,000 seedlings were planted and thanks to a beneficial rainy season have grown rapidly. Wildlife, including birds, deer, pangolin and tapir have already begun to return to the area, providing hope that rhinos will roam this area in the future.



## Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary (SRS) Takes Steps to Protect Against COVID

The SRS has been closed to outside visitors since May 2020. The facility enacted safety protocols in an abundance of caution for its staff and seven resident rhinos. Keepers and veterinary staff don protective equipment when interacting with the rhinos and outside food is triple washed before being delivered to the paddocks. The rhinos seem to like the new procedures. Keepers reported that the rhinos have been eating much more browse since the procedures were implemented.

*photo courtesy of Yayasan Badak Indonesia*



# JAVAN RHINOS

## The Javan Rhino On Camera

The Javan rhino is one of the most endangered mammal species on the planet. The world's sole remaining population, numbering merely 70-74 individuals, is found in the thick, steamy jungles of Ujung Kulon National Park (UKNP) on the island of Java in Indonesia, where they are hardly ever seen. But in 2020, the Javan rhino became a media star.

In July 2020, a rare Javan rhino was caught on video enjoying a wallow in the mud. The video was taken by a camera trap installed as part of a monitoring program funded by IRF with on-the-ground partner YABI, and in partnership with UKNP and the Indonesia Ministry of Environment and Forestry.

A few months later, the Ministry released videos of two Javan rhino mothers, each with a new calf, just in time for World Rhino Day. IRF is pleased to work with the Indonesian government in protecting, monitoring and creating new habitat for Javan rhinos, and we are excited that the world is learning more about this critically endangered species through this rare footage.



## Bringing Javan Rhinos Back to the Beach

Ujung Kulon National Park staff estimate that around 50% of people committing illegal activities in the Park are entering from the coast, pulling up on the same beaches that rhinos also frequent. In January 2020, with the Park and our local partner, Yayasan Badak Indonesia (YABI), IRF launched a new marine patrol unit to expand the success of the terrestrial Rhino Protection Units (RPUs) in protecting rhinos.



*photo courtesy of Yayasan Badak Indonesia*

The Marine Patrol consists of two, four-person units, led by a Park ranger, utilizing a larger patrol boat and a smaller pursuit boat to apprehend suspects. During the first 12 months of operations, the marine patrol units apprehended 220 people illegally fishing and encroaching within Ujung Kulon park waters.

It's important for Javan rhinos to supplement their diet with salt, and they have historically been sighted along the park's beaches for this reason. But in recent years, as more illegal fishermen have built fishing platforms along the northern peninsula, fewer and fewer rhinos have been seen. Instead, they must traverse much greater distances inland to find plants that contain enough salt. Now that the marine patrol units are effectively keeping illegal fishermen away, we hope that more rhinos will return to the beaches.





## BLACK & WHITE RHINOS

*photo courtesy of Phinda Private Game Reserve*

### Reserve Relief Fund

As the global pandemic caused country-wide shutdowns and crippled world travel last spring, IRF jumped into action to establish the Reserve Relief Fund with the help of long time supporters and new donors. The fund was created to help game reserves and parks across Africa continue vital conservation work as they faced severe budget shortfalls resulting from the loss of tourism revenue. IRF has now awarded more than \$260,000 in grants to help pay staff salaries and overtime, purchase health and safety equipment, and keep rhino protection units in the field where they are needed.

In South Africa's Welgevonden Game Reserve, IRF funded salaries for twenty security personnel and operational fees for camera surveillance capabilities. Thanks to this continued security, reserve staff helped arrest 12 rhino poachers over the past 9 months - 2 of these were high-profile poachers with outstanding warrants for their arrest and another had previously escaped from prison while in custody for rhino poaching.

Also in South Africa, IRF provided emergency security funding to Phinda Private Game Reserve, paying for rhino monitors and fuel. Phinda also dehorned 30 rhinos to reduce poaching risk. And in eSwatini's Big Game Parks, we helped keep 26 rangers employed to protect the population of black and white rhinos.

In all, 11 grants to partners in South Africa, Zimbabwe and eSwatini were able to continue critical protection and monitoring activities to keep rhinos and other wildlife safe.



## Strengthening K9 Support and Training for Southern Africa

The International Rhino Foundation (IRF) awarded a \$100,000 grant in 2020 to the Southern African Wildlife College (SAWC) to support training and anti-poaching operations to help protect rhinos in the wild.

SAWC, established in 1997, trains rangers and dogs in the disciplines needed to assist in the detection and apprehension of poachers. SAWC has developed and tested an innovative strategy to counter poaching threats. Through the combination of well-trained field rangers, including K9 units, and the addition of free-running canines, anti-poaching successes on the ground have increased from 3 – 5 % without a canine asset to over 60% with the use of both on-leash and free-tracking dogs.

IRF is pleased to provide funding at a critical time to proven programs that keep rhinos safe and to help train the future conservation leaders in southern Africa.



*© Sean Viljoen*



*© Peter Chadwick*

## Technology in the Fight Against Poaching

Technology plays a critical role in helping law enforcement and conservation organizations stop poachers, with radar increasingly being used successfully to detect, track and provide real-time actionable intelligence in South Africa.

IRF's on-the-ground partner in South Africa, Stop Rhino Poaching (SRP), recently started deploying a Mobile Surveillance Unit at undisclosed locations to detect poachers, and moves it to reserves as needed.

The new mobile unit is similar to the Meerkat wide area surveillance system deployed in Kruger National Park by the South Africa government's Council for Scientific and Industrial Research and other partners.

These types of mobile units can distinguish between human and animal movement and include high definition radar with optical and thermal cameras and advanced video analytics. They can spot poachers at night and alert park rangers to their presence. The technology is portable so it can easily be moved to poaching hotspots; it can also be deployed as a stand-alone solution or serve as a support to larger surveillance systems. The system is also fully mobile in rough terrain and can sustain itself with eco-friendly power for extended periods.

During the first 21 months of Meerkat's use in Kruger, there was an 80% decrease in poaching incidents in areas where it was deployed. We are hopeful that SRP's mobile surveillance unit will have similar results.





## BLACK & WHITE RHINOS

© Nicholas Harvey

### Overcoming COVID Restrictions in Zimbabwe

In May 2020, Zimbabwe joined much of the world in a country-wide lockdown to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. IRF's on-the-ground partner, the Lowveld Rhino Trust (LRT), pivoted quickly to meet challenges, which included a scarcity of supplies, the grounding of all aircraft and restricted movements for critical monitoring staff.

LRT was forced to delay rhino management operations that normally take place in May, focusing on maintaining essential activities. Eventually, special approvals were secured to hold these operations in late September. LRT staff and vets immobilized 29 rhinos in the Buby Valley Conservancy (BVC) for various medical and conservation procedures - 12 rhinos were ear-notched for identification, 16 were dehorned to remove poaching incentive, and 13 were fitted with horn transmitters for tracking.

In July, poachers killed a black rhino cow in BVC and wounded her 16-month-old female calf. The bullet injuries to the calf were severe and she was captured for treatment and moved to a boma for care. The calf, named Pumpkin, made a remarkable recovery and was released into a lion-free section of the park six weeks later. Pumpkin is doing well in her new home.

As a result of efforts by the Conservancy and LRT to increase protection and monitoring activities to combat an increase in poaching that began in 2019, only 4 rhinos were lost to poaching in 2020, compared to 71 in the previous year. At least 19 rhino births were recorded (with more likely to be confirmed soon), for a 6.1% total population growth this year.



courtesy of Lowveld Rhino Trust

*Pumpkin's story captured the world's attention and was told in a variety of languages across the globe.*

## DEMAND REDUCTION & POLICY

### Combating Illegal Wildlife Trade in Vietnam

While the act of poaching is often the most visible and most readily understood part of wildlife crime, it is the transport, trade and sale of illegal rhino horn - from the protected area, across provincial boundaries and national borders and all the way to the end consumer - that makes this type of crime not just possible, but also profitable.

Although the rhino horn trade is controlled by global organized crime syndicates, often those arrested are poachers and low level operators. It is also important to build cases against traders, sellers and higher level operatives to begin to dismantle criminal networks and secure severe criminal penalties to disincentivize poachers.

Last year judicial authorities in Vietnam (one of the world's largest consumers of illegal rhino horn) secured a record conviction - the single longest prison term for any rhino horn smuggler to date in the country. The International Rhino Foundation's (IRF) partner, Education for Nature - Vietnam (ENV), has worked with the government to strengthen the enforcement of wildlife laws and ensure that wildlife crimes are prosecuted as intended.

This collaboration resulted in the Can Tho City Court sentencing Do Thanh Son to 12 years and 6 months in prison for illegally smuggling rhino horn into Vietnam.

#### ENV recommends 10 key intervention strategies to combat wildlife trade in Vietnam:

1. Take down leaders of wildlife criminal networks
2. Eradicate corruption
3. Establish effective deterrents
4. Reduce the risk of future pandemics associated with wildlife consumption and trade
5. Implement a clear ban on any form of commercial trade of endangered species
6. Strengthen management of conservation facilities and non-commercial facilities
7. End bear farming in Vietnam
8. Strictly regulate and manage commercial wildlife farms
9. Hold local authorities responsible for eradicating wildlife crime in their jurisdictions
10. Pull the plug on wildlife crime on the internet

IRF supports these efforts and has seen early successes with convictions secured with longer prison sentences. We will continue to work to strengthen wildlife crime and prosecution, sharing best practices and encouraging collaboration between officials both in-country and between nations to keep rhinos alive in the wild.



# THE FINANCIALS

## 2020 REVENUE

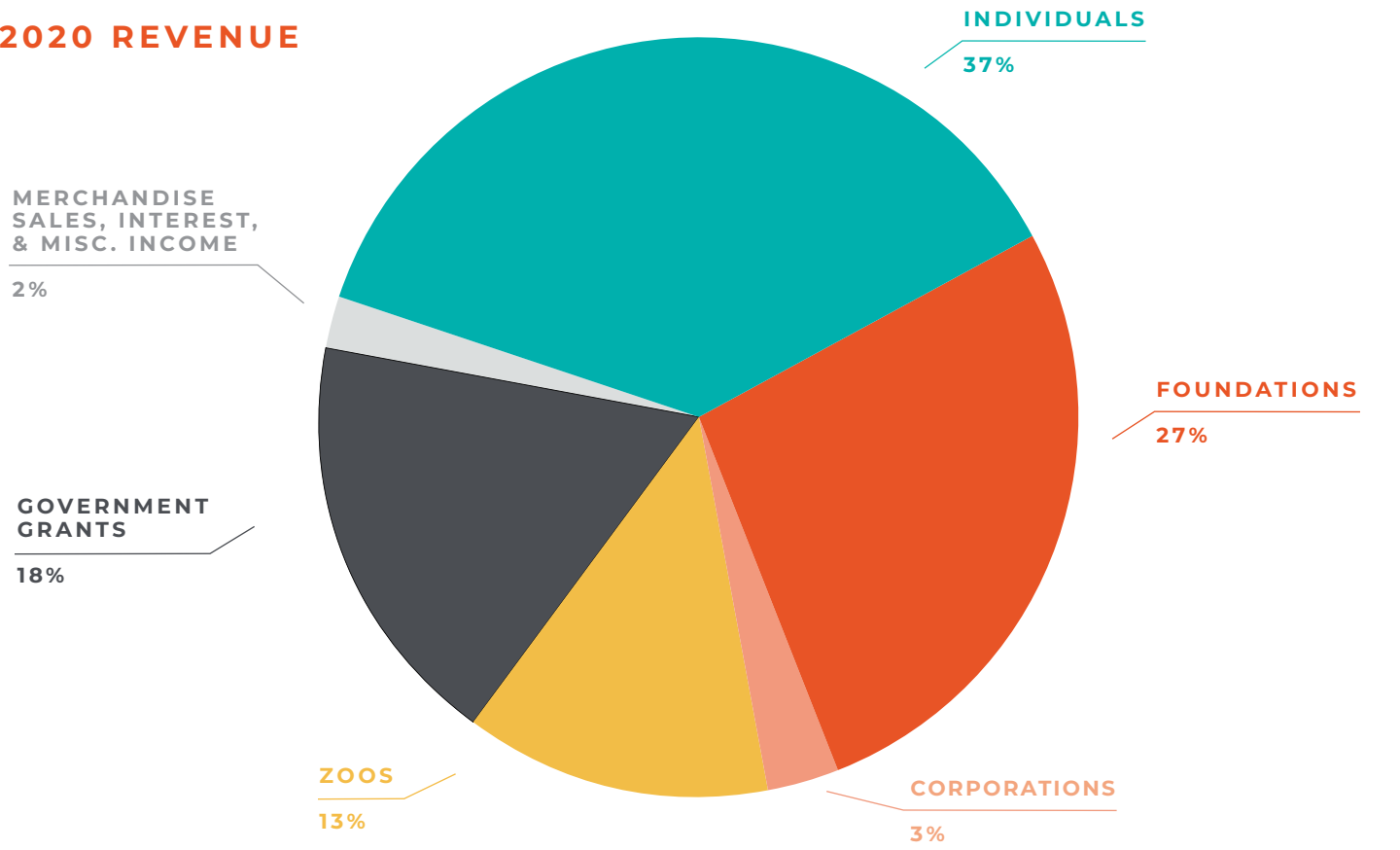
INDIVIDUALS	\$1,340,470
FOUNDATIONS	\$959,290
CORPORATIONS	\$113,782
ZOOS	\$485,020
GOVERNMENT GRANTS	\$643,184
TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS	\$3,541,746
MERCHANDISE SALES, NET	\$10,787
INTEREST & MISC. INCOME	\$54,949
TOTAL REVENUE	\$3,607,482

## 2020 EXPENSES

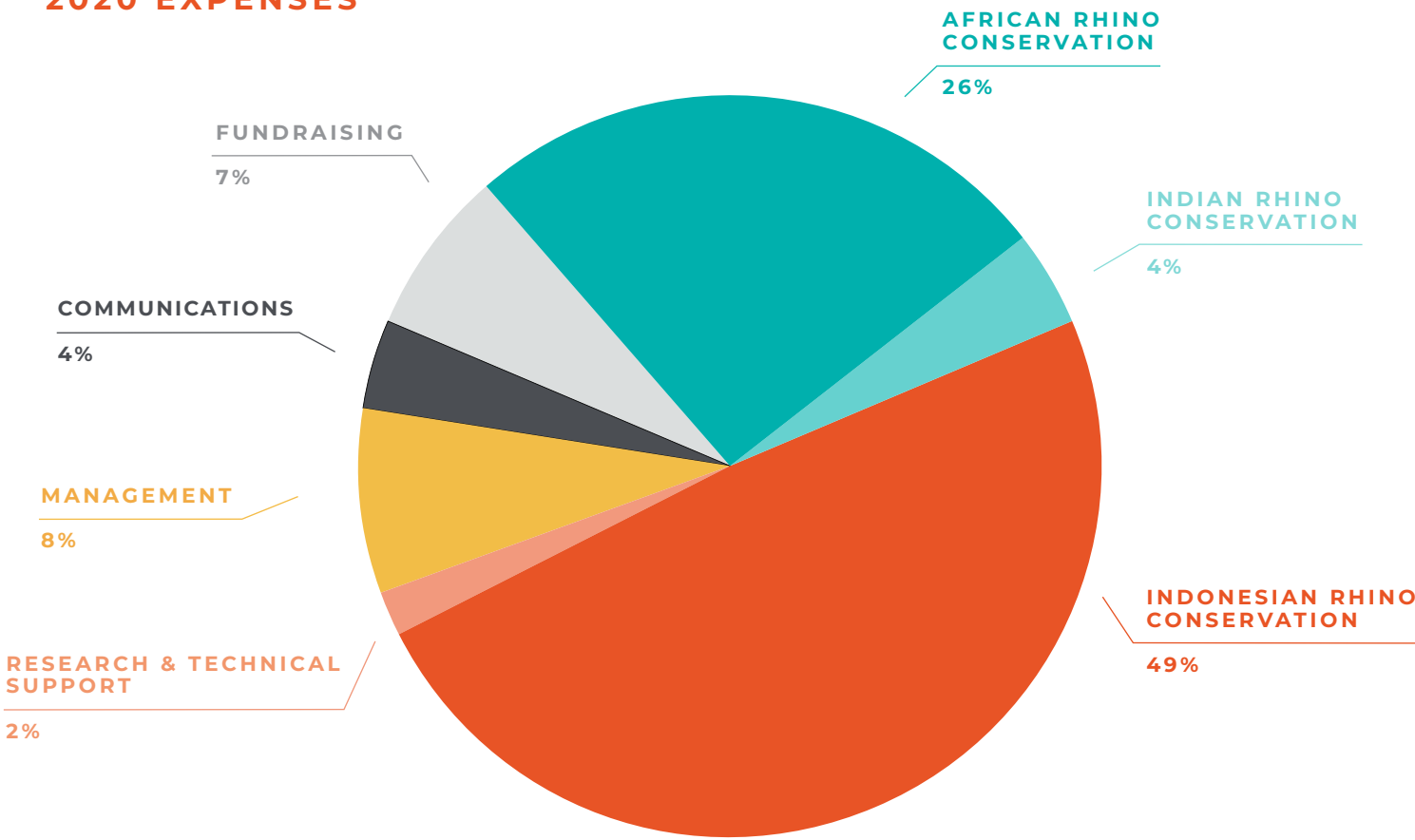
AFRICAN RHINO CONSERVATION	\$1,001,425
INDIAN RHINO CONSERVATION	\$152,287
INDONESIAN RHINO CONSERVATION	\$1,910,405
RESEARCH & TECHNICAL SUPPORT	\$96,996
TOTAL PROGRAM EXPENSES	\$3,161,113
MANAGEMENT	\$313,659
FUNDRAISING	\$282,571
COMMUNICATIONS	\$156,830
TOTAL ANNUAL EXPENSES	\$3,914,173

The International Rhino Foundation is the world's largest rhino conservation organization dedicated to all five species.

## 2020 REVENUE



## 2020 EXPENSES







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current as of printing

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