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## **Sumatran Rhino Born at Cincinnati Zoo Provides Spark of Hope for Indonesia**

**CINCINNATI** – “Andalas,” the Cincinnati Zoo’s first Sumatran rhino calf has produced the first Sumatran rhino pregnancy in Southeast Asia for the global captive breeding program. Andalus and his mate, “Ratu”, both eight-years-old, were brought together through international goodwill and cooperation in an effort to save this critically endangered species. Now, scientists at the Cincinnati Zoo are joining conservationists around the globe, celebrating the rare pregnancy.

In 2001, Andalus became the first Sumatran rhino born in captivity in 112 years. Six years later, he journeyed across the world, more than 10,000 miles and 63 hours by plane, truck and ferry, with a very important mission: to breed successfully with the female rhinos at the Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary in the Way Kambas National Park in Indonesia.

Ratu, a native Indonesian, wandered into a village just outside the Way Kambas Park and was brought to the Sanctuary to keep her safe. The pair have been getting to know one another through sight, sound, smell and other ways in which only rhinos can ascertain, ever since. And now, Andalus and Ratu are expecting a large 75 pound calf in May 2011.

The two rhinos will remain at the 250-acre complex built and supported by the International Rhino Foundation (IRF). The sanctuary houses five rhinos that are part of an intensively managed research and breeding program aimed at contributing to the conservation of the species in the wild.

Dr. Terri Roth, Director of Cincinnati Zoo’s Center for Conservation and Research of Endangered Wildlife (CREW) and vice president for IRF’s Asia programs, relied on her extensive training in reproduction to produce three Sumatran rhino calves, beginning with Andalus in 2001, utilizing hormonal and ultrasonographic techniques to determine the optimal time for introducing males and females. CREW scientists have shared all of their information and methodologies while providing equipment and training to the veterinary staff at the Sanctuary in the hope that Indonesia would also be successful.

“The Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary has been encouraged by Cincinnati Zoo’s success,” said Widodo Ramono, executive director of the Indonesian Rhino Foundation. “Our staff has diligently applied the Cincinnati Zoo’s methodology, especially ultra-sonographic techniques, to achieve this result.”

The Cincinnati Zoo is the only place in the world to successfully breed this critically endangered species in captivity. Two out of the three Sumatran rhinos living in the United States, five-year-old Suci and her father, Ipuh, reside at the Cincinnati Zoo. Harapan moved to the White Oak Conservation Center in Yulee, Florida in 2008. Ipuh was sent to the U.S. by the Indonesian government as part of a cooperative agreement developed between Indonesia and four U.S. zoos (Cincinnati, Bronx, Los Angeles and San Diego).

“Sumatran rhinos are very solitary by nature and very aggressive towards one another except when a female is in estrus,” said Dr. Roth. “Through science we can determine when the female is ready to ovulate so that she is paired with a male at the right time and fighting is minimized while the likelihood of conception is optimized. It is wonderful to see the science developed at CREW help our Indonesian colleagues achieve success in the forest of Sumatra.”

According to Dr. Roth, captive Sumatran rhinos fill many roles. They represent a valuable resource for learning about the species’ basic biology which can facilitate efforts to monitor and protect them in the wild. They serve as ambassadors for their species helping to educate both children and adults about rhinos and the rainforest, and they are becoming increasingly important as a back up to the wild population as the latter continues to decline. ”

Considered the most endangered of all rhino species and perhaps the most endangered mammal species on earth, it is estimated that 50 percent of the Sumatran rhino population has been lost in the past 15 years. The primary cause is conversion of rhino habitat for agriculture, even in some national parks, and poaching for its horn which some Asian cultures believe contains medicinal properties. Today, there are only 10 Sumatran rhinos living in captivity worldwide and fewer than 200 animals exist in isolated pockets of Sabah, Malaysia and the island of Sumatra in Indonesia. Sumatran rhinos can live 35-40 years.

The Cincinnati Zoo is working closely with the Indonesian Ministry of Forestry, the Indonesian Rhino Foundation, the IUCN Asian Rhino Specialist Group and the International Rhino Foundation, to protect this species in the wild, and also propagate Sumatran rhinos in captivity. Both approaches will be necessary to secure the future of this critically endangered species for future generations.

With just 200 Sumatran rhinos left in the world, it is critical that members of the global community work together to overcome all of the challenges to saving this species from extinction, said Dr. Roth.”

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*The world famous Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden was rated the #1 attraction locally and one of the top zoos in the nation by Zagat Survey. It was recognized by Parents Magazine as #7 on the “Top 10 Best Zoos for Kids.” It has also been recognized by Child Magazine as one of “The 10 Best Zoos for Kids.” Over one million people visit the Zoo’s award-winning exhibits, and more than 500 animal and 3000 plant species annually. The Zoo is an accredited member of the American Zoo & Aquarium Association (AZA) and the American Public Gardens Association (APGA), is internationally known for its success in the protection and propagation of endangered animals and plants, and engages in research and conservation projects worldwide.*