TESTIMONY OF TEIKO SAITO, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS FOR THE U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, SUBCOMMITTEE ON FISHERIES,WILDLIFE, OCEANS AND INSULAR AFFAIRS REGARDING H.R. 50, THE MULTINATIONAL SPECIES CONSERVATION FUNDS REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2011; H.R. 1760, THE GREAT APE CONSERVATION REAUTHORIZATION AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2011; AND H.R. 1761, THE MARINE TURTLE CONSERVATION REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2011

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Chairman Fleming and Members of the Subcommittee, I am Teiko Saito, Assistant Director for International Affairs for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), Department of the Interior (Department).

The Department appreciates this opportunity to testify on H.R. 50, the Multinational Species Conservation Funds Reauthorization Act of 2011; H.R. 1761, the Great Ape Conservation Reauthorization Amendments Act of 2011; H.R. 1760, the Marine Turtle Conservation Reauthorization Act of 2011; and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) implementation of these international conservation Acts.

The Department strongly supports these bills, and we greatly appreciate the Subcommittee's continued leadership in international conservation. The Service has a long history of proactively addressing international wildlife species conservation. We work with private citizens, local communities, state and federal agencies, foreign governments, native peoples, and nongovernmental organizations to promote coordinated domestic and international strategies to protect, restore, and enhance wildlife and habitats. The Service is the agency charged with implementing the United States' obligations under several international conservation treaties, including the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, the Convention on Nature Protection and Wild Life Preservation in the Western Hemisphere, and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). Technical expertise and an on-the-ground presence through international agreements and other programs give the Service a unique role in conserving species and habitats around the world. The Multinational Species Conservation Funds (MSCFs) support the conservation of some of the world's rarest and most threatened species in their natural habitats, including the African elephant and Asian elephant, as well as rhinoceros, tigers, great apes, and marine turtles.

The grant programs established through these Acts provide technical and cost-sharing grant assistance to range countries for species conservation and as such are a key element of the Service's Wildlife Without Borders-Species programs. These Acts represent the nation's commitment to help support conservation of rare and highly threatened species in the wild. In many cases, this is the only government dedicated funding for these particular species. The MSCFs provide opportunity for projects that otherwise would not get off the ground, encouraging other donors to support innovative and effective conservation efforts. They achieve

significant leveraging of funds from a growing list of outside partners, which has greatly increased the impact of these grant programs. With a modest investment, the MSCFs are able to promote unprecedented achievements in the conservation of elephants, rhinos, tigers, great apes, and marine turtles. The funds help secure the interest and commitment of governments and communities around the world.

H.R. 50, the Multinational Species Conservation Funds Reauthorization Act of 2011

The Service strongly supports H.R. 50, the Multinational Species Conservation Funds Reauthorization Act of 2011, which reauthorizes the three longest-running Multinational Species Conservation Acts: the African Elephant Conservation Act, the Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Act, and the Asian Elephant Conservation Act.

The African Elephant Conservation Act

African elephant populations are threatened by poaching, loss of habitat, and conflicts with humans. In the late 1970s, when elephant populations were thought to number about 1.3 million, the value of ivory skyrocketed in international markets from $7.50 per kilogram to over $400 per kilogram. This upsurge in ivory trafficking is believed to have cut Africa's elephant population in half. In 1989, the species was listed as Appendix I of CITES, making it illegal to trade in elephants or ivory commercially. Since then, populations have stabilized or recovered in a few southern African countries, but continued to decline in others.

A new onslaught of poaching threatens elephants in some areas, while in others, elephants are increasingly coming into conflict with growing human settlements and farms. Most countries supporting wild populations of elephants are struggling to conserve them. Commercial poaching for meat and ivory, combined with instability from political conflict and civil war, have devastated many elephant populations, particularly in forest habitat of Central Africa. The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), home to an estimated 112,000 elephants in 1992, is now feared to have only six populations of little more than 500 elephants. Vast areas that were occupied by elephants as recently as a decade ago are now devoid of these forest giants. The current continental population of savannah and forest elephants is estimated to be 500,000 to 600,000, but these increasing threats cloud the future of African elephant populations.

The African Elephant Conservation Act, authorized by Congress in 1988, created the African Elephant Conservation Fund (AfECF), which plays a critical role in assisting range countries to conserve and manage elephants and their habitats. From 2006 through 2010, the AfECF supported 138 projects with $8.2 million in grant funding and $22.2 million in matching contributions from partners and collaborators. Projects funded include assisting range countries to build law enforcement and management capacity, mitigating human-elephant conflict, conducting conservation education, conducting surveys and monitoring, establishing corridors, and conducting essential applied research.

For example, with this funding, the local wildlife authority in the DRC has been able to build patrol posts and train and equip rangers in and around Okapi Faunal Reserve and Virunga

National Park. Trained officers have improved relations with local residents, removed thousands of snares, disarmed militias, and disbanded illegal bushmeat and charcoal operations in the protected areas.

In other areas, such as in southern Africa, the elephants in protected areas are increasingly surrounded by human settlements and are becoming isolated, stressing the vegetation upon which elephants and other wildlife depend. Elephants moving through human settlements and farms come into conflict with humans trying to protect their homes and crops. Farmers may lose their crops, resulting in lost income, and they may even lose their lives when they attempt to defend their fields. Elephants may suffer debilitating injuries and are often killed in retaliation for raiding crops.

The AfECF has supported research in Amboseli National Park in southern Kenya where agriculture is rapidly encroaching on elephant range. Support from the Fund allowed for collaboration between Duke University and the Amboseli Elephant Research Project to interpret crop raiding behavior to determine how such behavior begins and whether it is more common in related individuals or is influenced by other life history traits and social characteristics. This research will provide information crucial to understanding and managing human-elephant conflict.

The Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Act

Rhino and tiger populations are particularly targeted by poachers because their body parts are in high demand on the global black market. Tiger organs and bones and rhino horns are used in Asian medicines and sold to consumers who believe these animal products convey strength, health, and virility. Rhino horns are also carved for dagger handles as a coveted status symbol in the Middle East

The Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Act, authorized by Congress in 1994, has greatly assisted efforts to conserve the five rhino species (African and Asian) and five extant wild tiger sub-species. This is the only government-sponsored dedicated funding source for conservation of wild tigers in the world. From 2006 through 2010, the Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Fund (RTCF) supported 228 projects with $10.6 million in grant funding, and $18 million in matching contributions from partners and collaborators. A variety of projects have been funded, including surveys, conservation education, law enforcement, habitat protection, and capacity building.

In Africa, there are two rhinoceros species: black rhinos and white rhinos. At one time, there were, among the black and white rhino species, five total subspecies. In the last ten years, two African rhino subspecies have gone extinct in the wild. Before 1900, Africa had more than one million rhinos, and they occurred in most sub-Saharan countries. But, by the 1990s, rhinos were extinct in many range states. Only 2,300 black rhinos and fewer than 10,000 white rhinos survived. Today, through support from the RTCF and tremendous dedication and sacrifice by our partners in Africa, black rhinos have slowly begun to recover, with a current population of more than 4,800. White rhinos are also recovering and now number more than 20,000, but a recent upsurge in rhino poaching threatens to undermine years of progress.

Through the RTCF, the Service provides critical support to increase the capacity of park guards and wildlife management authorities to address poaching and other threats to rhinos in Africa. The RTCF provided infrastructure, training, and logistical support for the reintroduction of black rhinos to North Luangwa National Park in Zambia and to augment populations of rhinos in Serengeti and Mkomazi in Tanzania and at conservancies in Kenya, Zimbabwe, Namibia, and South Africa. Funds are continually needed to keep rhino populations safe throughout their remaining range.

Asia supports three rhino species: the Indian rhino (or greater one-horned rhino), the Sumatran rhino, and the Javan rhino. The Sumatran and Javan rhinos in Southeast Asia are the most endangered, with only 200 and between 37-45 remaining, respectively. Strict protections, coupled with significant support from the RTCF and its partners, has increased numbers of the Indian rhino from fewer than 200 early in the 20th century to an estimated 2,850 today.

The RTCF is strengthening our partners that work with wildlife authorities in Nepal, as well as the police and the army, to assist in the identification and arrest of the poachers who have so badly damaged the country's rhino population in recent years. In Indonesia, the RTCF has partnered with the Indonesian Forest Department and a non-government organization in support of highly effective, critically needed, anti-poaching patrols that protect Sumatran and Javan rhinos. These projects will increase rhino protection and law enforcement, reducing poaching of the most endangered rhino species in the world.

Wild tigers, once abundant throughout Asia, now live in small fragmented groups, mostly in protected forests, refuges, and national parks. In general these populations are in decline. Tigers now occupy only 7 percent of their historic range and 40 percent less habitat than 10 years ago. Recent surveys indicate the South China tiger may have become extinct in the wild, with only 47 remaining in China's zoos.

There are many threats to the survival of wild tigers in addition to poaching including habitat destruction, loss of prey, and conflicts with human settlements. Experts estimate that more than 500 tigers are killed each year across their range. The illegal trade in tiger skins and in tiger bones for health tonics has resulted in the total loss of tiger populations in places such as India's Sariska Tiger Reserve. In addition to poaching-for-profit, tigers are killed by local villagers who fear attacks on humans or livestock. As human populations expand further into the habitats of wild animals, the resulting conflict poses a serious threat to both human and animal safety.

The RTCF has supported projects throughout Asia aimed at conserving and protecting tigers and their habitat by building the capacity of poaching response teams and educating people living near tiger areas. For example, the critically endangered subspecies, the Russian "Amur" tiger, has been the focus of a successful, long-term anti-poaching campaign through the Phoenix Fund. With the RTCF's support, the campaign and associated annual tiger festivals reached thousands in Vladivostok and other cities throughout Russian province, Primorskii Krai. Grants have supported the development of curricula for hundreds of classrooms in the Krai, to teach students at all levels about tiger biology and conservation. A recent grant award funded a "Teachers for Tigers" manual that will increase the effectiveness of tiger conservation education efforts.

In November 2010, the U.S. government attended the International Forum on Tiger Conservation in St. Petersburg, Russia, and endorsed the goal of doubling the number of tigers in the wild by 2022. Fulfilling that goal will take continued financial commitment from the U.S. and other international funding sources.

The Asian Elephant Conservation Act

Large herds of elephants once roamed freely throughout the forests and savannas of Asia. Today, fewer than 40,000 Asian elephants exist in the wild, half of these in India. Habitat loss, poaching and human-elephant conflicts are the largest threat to the survival of these animals in the wild.

The Asian Elephant Conservation Act, authorized by Congress in 1997, has greatly enhanced the conservation status of the Asian elephant. The Act supports the efforts of a wide range of partners to train wildlife professionals, improve law enforcement capacity, mitigate human-elephant conflict, establish community development programs, undertake applied research, raise awareness of elephant conservation issues, provide education programs, establish elephant corridors that minimize habitat fragmentation, and support the ongoing efforts of the 13 range country governments to survey, monitor, and develop effective elephant management strategies. From 2006 through 2010, the Asian Elephant Conservation Fund (AsECF) supported 161 projects with $8 million in grant funding and $10.2 million in matching contributions from partners and collaborators.

Elephants require significant natural resources to survive. Mature bulls weigh as much as 11,000 pounds, and each elephant consumes more than 440 pounds of vegetation and 52 gallons of water every day. Each animal needs a "living space" of 80 square miles. Continued destruction of habitat and increased human settlement in areas previously occupied by elephants has resulted in rising incidents of crop-raiding and subsequent conflict with human communities. Similar to some African elephant populations, frequent raids by Asian elephants into agricultural fields, coupled with attempts by farmers to chase the animals away, often result in tragedy for both elephants and humans.

The AsECF is supporting the development of new approaches to manage crop-raiding. A community operated elephant early warning system is now assisting villagers to protect their crops, reducing human wildlife conflict in Sri Lankan villages. With funding from the AsECF, the Sri Lanka Wildlife Conservation Society has developed an elephant intrusion early warning system called "EleAlert". The system supports electric fences around communities to keep elephants *out* rather than fence them *in* national parks. The system is completely operated and maintained by local villagers and provides the community with an audible alarm when an elephant intrusion occurs. It is estimated that the early warning system will allow villagers to identify problem fencing areas and points of elephant intrusions, thus helping to reduce the amount of crop and property damage.

On the island of Sumatra in Indonesia, human-elephant conflict in previous decades led to the disappearance of at least nine populations of elephants. To ensure the survival of the remaining

three elephant populations, the AsECF is supporting a promising new strategy that incorporates a training program, community guards, alarm systems, and elephant deterrents in five target villages around Way Kambas National Park. In Sri Lanka, the AsECF supported a project to monitor elephant movement and behavior within Yala National park and surrounding lands to develop an appropriate buffer zone to mitigate human-elephant conflict outside the park. The results of the project have not only yielded benefits for elephants and local communities in and around Yala National Park but are also changing the overall approach to elephant management in Sri Lanka.

Poaching also poses a serious threat to survival for all populations. In parts of India, the poaching of male tuskers is altering the male Asian elephant population to include mainly tusk-less males known as "mukhnas." The loss of males in general and tusked males in particular has resulted in highly skewed sex ratios in many wild Asian elephant populations. Tusks are very important behaviorally in dominance heirarchy, to attract mates, to fend off predators, to be used as a tool for digging and peeling bark. The AsECF provides support for law enforcement across the range countries especially in protected areas to prevent poaching for ivory and other products. This fund is working with the Forest Department law enforcement authorities in northeast India to protect Asian elephants in this important area for Asian elephants. The AsECF is also supporting law enforcement and protection for Asian elephants in Sumatra, Thailand, and Malaysia. The AsECF provided significant support for the Management Information System program, which is being used by many SE Asian countries to monitor their law enforcement effort.

Through all of the MSCFs discussed above, the Service has implemented a streamlined process that allows for timely approval of projects and quick response to emergency situations. Each project funded is a cooperative effort with foreign governments, non-governmental organizations, or private sector entities. No in-country project is approved unless it has the full support of in-country government officials, and has been identified as a project that will address the country's conservation priorities. Funding is delivered to the field rapidly and efficiently to target the most critical conservation needs. To implement these programs, the Service works with conservation partners within the U.S. and the range countries. These collaborators have vast on-the-ground experience and are experts on the ecology of the species as well as the human dimensions of conservation.

H.R. 1760, the Great Ape Conservation Reauthorization Amendments Act of 2011

The Service strongly supports H.R. 1760, the Great Ape Conservation Reauthorization Amendments Act of 2011, which leverages conservation actions to conserve more than 20 species of apes in Africa and Asia. The Great Ape Conservation Act (Act) was authorized by Congress in 2000 and created the Great Ape Conservation Fund (GACF) to assist efforts to conserve gorillas, chimpanzees, and bonobos in Africa, and orangutans and gibbons in Asia. H.R. 1760 would support great ape conservation by increasing the capacity of foreign governments, wildlife managers, local communities, and other organizations to address primary threats to the great apes, including habitat loss, illegal hunting, and the illegal pet trade.

The GACF provides financial and technical support for a variety of projects and efforts. These include building institutional and human resource capacity, improving law enforcement, educating local communities about conservation issues, and providing economic incentives for conservation. In addition, GACF provides support for collecting key scientific data on ape species that are greatly needed to achieve ape conservation. This includes research related to distribution, population status, and infectious diseases. From 2006 through 2010, the GACF supported 293 projects with $21.2 million in grant funding (also including funding transferred from the U.S. Agency for International Development Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment) to the GACF, and $25.8 million in matching contributions from partners and collaborators. Much of the success of the GACF is due to its direct and coordinated support of on-the-ground conservation projects in Africa and Asia.

In Africa, the two countries containing 75 percent of the gorilla population, the Republic of Congo and Gabon, experienced more than a 50 percent reduction in the gorilla population between 1983-2000. As a result, identifying and protecting the last great areas of significant great ape conservation interest is a priority under the Great Ape Conservation Act.

For example, the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), a partner in the Republic of Congo, was awarded several small grants over a period of six years to determine gorilla status in the country. Surveys and other research done by their field teams produced an encouraging estimate of 125,000 western lowland gorillas in a vast area known as the 'green abyss.' While this area was known as having significant potential to hold populations of gorillas and other wildlife, until the forests were studied, no one realized the potential of this and other large areas of intact forest to the conservation of great apes. There are numerous other such places that need surveys and, more importantly, immediate and effective conservation projects on the ground.

In Asia, the wild population of orangutans is estimated at 50,000 to 60,000 individuals. Orangutans are critically endangered due to habitat loss from logging, peat land drainage, and a rapid expansion in palm oil plantations. Orangutans are killed for meat, medicinal purposes, and for raiding agricultural fields, while infants are taken for the pet trade. Left unchecked, such factors will lead to extinction. The GACF is strengthening conservation of both orangutans and gibbons, tackling many similar threats and population declines.

An innovative ongoing project in Indonesia's Gunung Palung National Park aims to incentivize the protection of critical orangutan habitat from illegal logging by providing healthcare benefits to communities that engage in reforestation efforts and organic farming. The GACF is supporting partner Health and Harmony in these efforts. The project not only directly benefits orangutans but also provides conservation-related alternative livelihoods and healthcare to villagers in need, as well as critical field training for Indonesian medical practitioners. Grant funding has directly supported a conservation education room for local villagers, maps of degraded areas, a seedling nursery and an economically sustainable reforestation program. More than 20 villages are now participating in the program and are working to protect the orangutan's habitat.

Perhaps the greatest threat to gorillas, chimpanzees, and bonobos in Africa, and to a lesser degree, orangutans and gibbons in Southeast Asia, is the illegal trade in bushmeat. Although apes comprise a small proportion of bushmeat production, poachers target them as their meat commands a premium price. Scientists have linked the consumption of bushmeat from apes to human contraction of the Ebola Hemorrhagic Fever virus. In addition, there is convincing scientific evidence linking the origin of HIV/AIDS to the consumption of chimpanzee meat. The risk of viruses of Ebola and HIV/AIDS being transferred between species poses incalculable danger to humanity. Ape bushmeat, as a known vector of fatal viral infections between gorillas and people, is therefore one of the greatest dangers to both wildlife and people in Central Africa.

With support from the GACF, our partners such as the WCS's Global Health Program and the government of Congo conducted extensive field studies and established a rapid-response capacity in the event of further outbreaks of the Ebola virus. Working with African health officials and local communities, they made significant strides to create a first line of defense against this devastating disease that severely threatens both apes and humans.

Section 2 of H.R. 1760 clarifies the Secretary's authority to issue multiyear grants, enabling the program to be more flexible in meeting the needs of grant recipients and allowing for increased capacity and stability to long-term projects in high priority areas. Overall, this provision will position the Service to better address the long-term threats facing ape populations throughout Africa and Asia. With regard to the requirement in Section 2 for a Panel of Experts, the Service has already taken steps to create such a panel. However, the creation and coordination of the panel will require resources above those committed to our existing responsibilities under the Great Ape Conservation Act.

H.R. 1761, the Marine Turtle Conservation Reauthorization Act of 2011

The Service supports H.R. 1761, the Marine Turtle Conservation Reauthorization Act (MTCA) of 2011, with qualifications detailed in the comments below. This Act addresses some of the most urgent conservation issues regarding marine turtles. Marine turtles are "flagship species" for both local and international coastal conservation. Because marine turtles circumnavigate the world's oceans to reach their nesting beaches, their conservation must be addressed through global efforts. By focusing on these species and their habitats, we can more adequately conserve and manage ecologically critical coastal and marine habitats around the world.

Less than 60 years ago, marine turtles were abundant, and widespread nesting on beaches was common. Today however, six of the seven marine turtle species (Kemp's ridley, Olive ridley, Loggerhead, Leatherback, Hawksbill, and Green turtle) are listed as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). All seven species are included in Appendix 1 of CITES. Because they disperse and migrate throughout the world's oceans, they are important indicators of coastal and marine environmental health on local, regional, and global scales.

To recover depleted marine turtle populations, the Service has worked closely with countries supporting nesting beaches and with our sister federal agencies in sustained, long-term conservation efforts. For example, surveys of the Kemp's ridley turtles on a nesting beach in

northeastern Mexico showed a drop from more than 40,000 nesting females estimated on one day in 1947 to fewer than 270 nesting females for the entire nesting season in 1985. The Service has worked with the Mexican government since 1978 to support nest protection measures that were first implemented in Mexico in the late 1960s, and this, along with the implementation in the 1990s of Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs) in commercial fishing, has reversed this downward trend. During the mid-1990s, surveys showed sustained increases in the number of recorded Kemp's ridley nests. In 2009 approximately 21,000 nests were recorded in Mexico.

The future sustainability of marine turtles remains uncertain, however. In addition to threats facing nesting beach habitat, marine turtle populations continue to be threatened by exploitation of eggs and turtles, trade in turtle parts, and bycatch mortality. And, overall, nesting populations for most species have declined worldwide, except for the nesting populations receiving long-term, sustained conservation, such as the U.S.-Mexico bi-national effort for Kemp's ridley turtles or the conservation of globally significant hawksbill nesting populations in Mona Island, Puerto Rico.

Since its enactment in 2004, the Marine Turtle Conservation Act has enabled the Service to support intensified nesting beach conservation on critical leatherback beaches in the Pacific in Mexico, Costa Rica, Indonesia, and Papua New Guinea. It is also playing a vital role in preventing a similar population crash of the West Africa leatherback nesting population. Based on an initiative in Gabon in 2005, the Service has helped organize governments and partners to work more closely together on nesting beaches, including nest protection on the key nesting beaches in Gabon and Congo subject to heavy exploitation. The Service has also helped establish community-based conservation programs with partners on remnant nesting populations in Liberia and Sierra Leone. From 2006 through 2010, the Marine Turtle Conservation Fund (MTCF) supported 147 projects with $5.6 million in grant funding, and $8.4 million in matching contributions from partners and collaborators.

The MTCF works with local communities to raise awareness and halt the harvest on nesting beaches. The nesting population of Hawksbill turtles on Chirqui Beach in Panama was once the largest in the Caribbean, but decades of poaching for their shells completely devastated this important nesting site. The MTCF provided support to the Sea Turtle Conservancy to conduct extensive community outreach, beach monitoring, and protection of the nesting hawksbills in an effort to help the population recover. Public outreach and engagement with the local Ngöbe Indian communities has been successful in reducing the poaching of nests and turtles on the beach, as well as reducing the capture of juvenile and adult turtles at sea by local fishermen. The project engages a broad coalition of partners from governments, communities, and NGOs, involving local communities, schools, and other stakeholders to build community support. The project has led to an impressive increase in the number of hawksbill nests over the last seven years and is now viewed as a model marine turtle conservation project.

H.R. 1761 would enable the Service to continue in its role as a provider of dedicated funding for comprehensive, global coordination and collaboration in developing countries where resources and capacity for marine turtle conservation are limited.

The Service recommends that the Subcommittee consider amending the bill's language authorizing the use of up to twenty percent of MTCA appropriations for domestic marine turtle conservation to instead authorize up to 20% of appropriated funds toward protecting freshwater turtles and tortoises worldwide.

While marine turtle conservation continues to be a critical conservation need, we also recognize that freshwater turtles and tortoises are severely imperiled. Among the more than 300 species of freshwater turtles worldwide, twenty-five percent are facing imminent peril or extinction in the next decade. By bringing a focus to these species and their habitats, H.R. 1761 would allow us to leverage funds and attention to ecologically critical areas of the planet that need to be considered and managed more adequately.

Conclusion

Mr. Chairman and Subcommittee Members, thank you again for this opportunity to update the Subcommittee on the Service's implementation of these Multinational Species Conservation Funds. We greatly appreciate your interest and your leadership in the conservation of rare, globally important species, and we look forward to working with you as you continue to consider the bills heard before the Subcommittee today. The Multinational Species Conservation Acts have formed the foundation for hundreds of projects around the world to address the needs of highly endangered species. These Acts produce focused and efficient support for the conservation of species that are ecologically important and aesthetically invaluable to Americans and people around the world. The Funds created by the Acts leverage significant matching resources, achieving a $1.60 match for every $1.00 spent from 2006 through 2010. We firmly believe that the Multinational Species Conservation Funds are the most effective instrument in existence to provide immediate and long-term benefits for the conservation of these species.