

Table 4. Rhino Census in Pabitora Wildlife Sanctuary

Year	Adult	Sub Adult	Calf	Total
1987	36	13	5	54
1993	32	5	11	56
1995	42	17	9	68
1999	43	12	19	74
2004	47	11	21	79
2006	48	12	21	81

PWLS has witnessed a steady increase in its rhino population. One of the major problems that the Sanctuary management faces is poaching, and, as the area of Pabitora is very small, the straying of rhinos from the sanctuary also leads to rhino poaching outside the rhino protected area. Others problems include degradation of habitat, immense biotic pressure, annual floods, overhead high tension power, human- animal conflict, siltation and scarcity of water during dry seasons, invasion of Ipomoea spp into grasslands grazing by livestock from fringe areas to protected areas.

However, major steps such as intensive patrolling inside the protected area and awareness programs have also been organized. Additionally, interaction sessions with Eco-Development Committees are being carried out and intelligence network is being made effective. Fringe area cattle also are vaccinated and the Park's area is being extended to ensure rhino security. Tourism has also increased from the past years.

**E - STATUS OF RHINO AND HORN STOCKPILES
IN ORANG NATIONAL PARK**

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Rhino conservation in Orang National Park began its momentum in 1972, with an official estimate of rhinos in the area. Covering 78.80 km², Orang National Park was declared as wildlife sanctuary in 1985 and in 1999 was upgraded into a National Park. The various habitats found in Orang are swap grasslands, moist deciduous forests, wet alluvial grassland and Khoir Sissoo forest. Orang also is home to many other species including the royal Bengal tiger, Asiatic elephant, hog deer, wild boar, 15 species of reptiles, and other animals. Table 5 details the rhino population trends since 1972:

Table 5. Rhino Population Trends in Orang National Park

Year	Adult			Sub Adult			Calves	Total
	Male	Female	Unsexed	Male	Female	Unsexed		
1972	10	13	3	3	2	-	4	35
1985	23	23	-	7	2	-	10	65
1991	28	41	5	-	1	14	8	97
1999	17	17	1	3	2	-	6	46
2006	28	27	-	-	-	4	9	68

Problems and threats include damage to habitat composition, severe poaching, lack of community participation, insufficient fund flow, weed invasion in grasslands, poor habitat connectivity, and declining grasslands (while woodlands have increased).

Nevertheless, Orang could support 100 to 150 rhinos. If NGOs and local people support conservation, the possibility of increasing the rhino population in the park can be enhanced, particularly if good awareness and education initiatives, coupled with ecotourism, is in place.