

Based on the above findings, the construction of the Holding and Main Boma (Enclosure) was started in the Kasodhora-Koroitoli-Jhaoni region of Burhachapori Wildlife Sanctuary. The total size of the Holding Boma is 44,000 square feet while the Main Boma extends over an area of 1.50 square kilometers¹. The Assam Forest Department will translocate a total of 10 rhinos to the Laokhowa Burhachapori Wildlife Sanctuary Complex beginning in 2015.

WEST BENGAL – Ujjwal Bhattacharya, I.F.S., Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Wildlife and Chief Wildlife Warden, West Bengal

There are two small national parks in West Bengal that hold rhinos: Gorumara (78.45 sq. km.) and Jaldapara (216.51 sq. km.) (Figure 28). Rhinos sometimes stray outside of the protected areas, especially from Gorumara.

Threats in these two areas include: limited grasslands in the Protected Areas; presumed inbreeding depression; male-male fighting resulting in straying outside the Protected Areas; and the ever-present threat of poaching for horn.

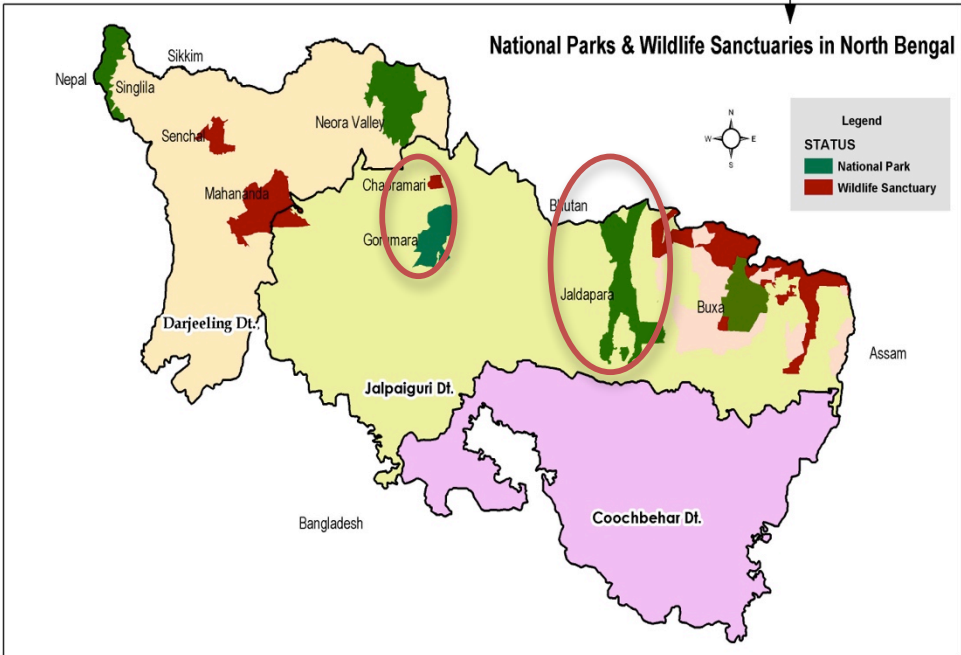
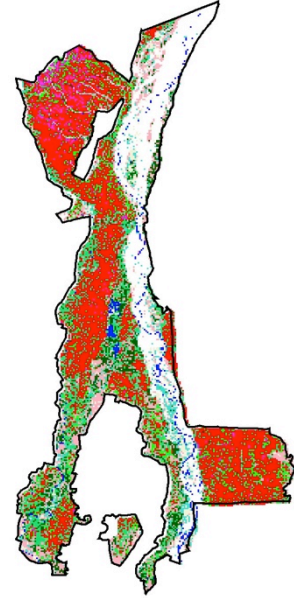


Figure 28. Gorumara and Jaldapara Wildlife Sanctuaries in West Bengal (circled in red).

¹ Details of the boma location and design are not included here due to security concerns.

JALDAPARA NATIONAL PARK

Situated in the foothills of the Eastern Himalayas in the Alipurduar district in West Bengal and on the bank of the Torsa River, the 216.51-sq.-km. Jaldapara National Park's (Figure 29) pure grassland patches of riverine forest extend over more than 30.58 sq. km. (14.11% of park), and along with Kharir-Sissoo succession covers more than 42.90 sq.km. (19.81% and with Simul-Siris succession over 22.59 sq.km. or 11.03%). Large tracts of grasslands remain in the flood plains of the Torsa River, which provides a source of water throughout the year. The Malangi area of the sanctuary is an important habitat for rhino. The Jaldapara area is highly populated and human-rhino conflict is not uncommon.



**Figure 21. Map of Jaldapara National Park
(legend not available) >**

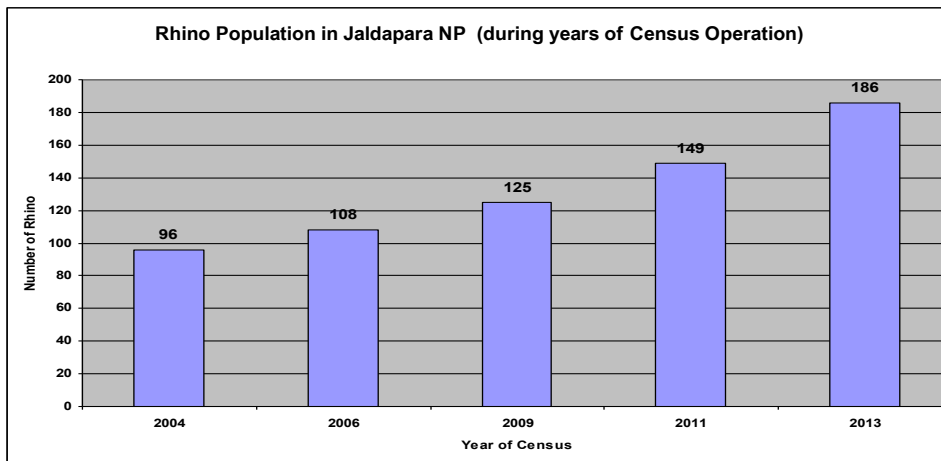


Figure 30. Population trends in Jaldapara National Park, 2004 through 2013.

The 5-year trends for Jaldapara's rhino population are shown in Figure 30. Annual mortality data are shown in Table 6; counts and birth rates are shown in Table 7.

Table 6. Mortality data, Jaldapara National Park 2005 – October 2014
 * in two natural deaths, horns were removed post-mortem

| Year (from 2005 onwards) | # rhinos poached | # Natural deaths |
|--------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 2005 | 0 | 3 |
| 2006 | 0 | 2 |
| 2007 | 0 | 4 |
| 2008 | 0 | 2 |
| 2009 | 1 | 4 |
| 2010 | 0 | 2 |
| 2011 | 0 | 3 |
| 2012 | 0 | 7 |
| 2013 | 0 | 8 |
| 2014 through October | 1 | 6 * |

Table 7. Number of rhinos and births in Jaldapara National Park, 2004 – 2013.

| Estimation Year | # of rhinos | rhinos born |
|-----------------|-------------|-------------|
| 2004 | 96 | 23 |
| 2006 | 108 | 26 |
| 2009 | 125 | 28 |
| 2011 | 149 | 30 |
| 2013 | 186 | 19 |

GORUMARA NATIONAL PARK

Located in the Terai, Gorumara National Park (roughly 80 sq. km.) is comprised roughly of 20% riverine grassland and savannah woodland, and about 10.5 % (7.6 sq. km.) is grassland. Rhinos often stray into adjacent forest areas and villages, which presents a serious problem. The park is located in the flood plains of Jaldhaka and Murti Rivers as well as other medium and small rivers and rivulets, which, together, have created a pocket of grassland. The Murti, Indong and the Garati Rivers provide sources of water throughout the year.

Because the area inhabited by the rhinos is small, there is a great deal of male-male fighting. Population trends from 2004 through 2013 are shown in Figure 31. Table 8 shows the known mortality data for the park; Table 9 shows the annual counts and known birth rates for the park.

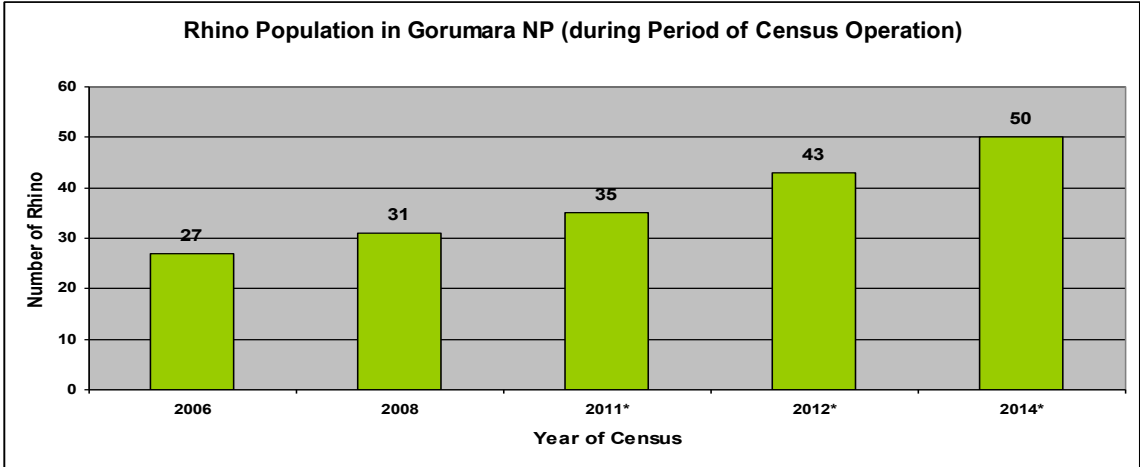


Figure 31. Rhino population trends in Gorumara National Park, 2006 – 2014.

Table 8. Mortality data, Gorumara National Park 2005 – October 2014.

** in one natural deaths, the horn was removed post-mortem

| Year (from 2005 onwards) | # rhinos poached | # rhinos died naturally |
|--------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| 2005 | 0 | 1 |
| 2006 | 0 | 1 |
| 2007 | 0 | 1 |
| 2008 | 0 | 1 |
| 2009 | 0 | 1 |
| 2010 | 0 | 0 |
| 2011 | 0 | 1 |
| 2012 | 0 | 0 |
| 2013 | 0 | 0 |
| Through October 2014 | 1 | 1 ** |

Table 9. Number of rhinos and births in Gorumara National Park, 2004 – 2014.

| Year | # of rhinos | rhinos born |
|-------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 2006 | 27 | 3 |
| 2008 | 31 | 08 |
| 2010 | 35 | 05 |
| 2012 | 43 | 08 |
| 2014 | 50 | 07 |

Conclusions for West Bengal

While poaching to-date has been nominal in both Jaldapara and Gorumara National Parks, there can be no decrease in anti-poaching efforts and it remains a critical threat. It should be noted that when Kaziranga National Park is flooded, poachers tend to shift to West Bengal parks, which is a dangerous trend. In terms of population health, inbreeding depression may be an important factor for the rhinos in these parks. There is a need to determine how to limit or somehow control infighting among males that often leads to straying outside the parks (and subsequent rhino deaths). A number of options need to be explored, including building increased tolerance among local communities for straying rhinos and/or developing straying/rescue team to deal with straying/problem rhinos.

DUDHWA NATIONAL PARK – Vino Krishan Singh, I.F.S., Deputy Director, Dudhwa Tiger Reserve

Dudhwa National Park’s rhino program began in 1984, with two males and three females translocated from the outskirts of Pabitora Wildlife Sanctuary. These animals were joined by four females from Chitwan in 1985. The current rhino population in the park is 32: 10 males, 14 females, and 8 calves.

This globally important ecoregion is 68% woodland, 22% grassland, and 10% wetlands. The area includes Dudhwa National Park (660 sq. km., gazetted in 1977), Kishanpur Wildlife Sanctuary (203 sq. km.) and Katarniaghat Wildlife Division (550 sq. km.). Since 1987, Dudhwa has been one of the Project Tiger sites. Figure 32 shows a map of the park.