



Rhinos and the **IUCN Red List**

**Black rhino**  
*Diceros bicornis*

**In-situ population\*** 5,366–5,627

**IUCN RED LIST CLASSIFICATION**  
**Critically Endangered** Considered to be facing an **extremely high risk** of extinction in the wild

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**Northern white rhino**  
*Ceratotherium simum cottoni*

**Population** 2 (in Kenya, introduced)

**IUCN RED LIST CLASSIFICATION**  
**Critically Endangered** Considered to be facing an **extremely high risk** of extinction in the wild

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**Southern white rhino**  
*Ceratotherium simum simum*

**In-situ population\*** 17,212–18,915

**IUCN RED LIST CLASSIFICATION**  
**Near Threatened** Is close to qualifying for or is likely to qualify for a threatened category in the near future

<NT>

**Javan rhino**  
*Rhinoceros sondaicus*

**In-situ population\*** 74

**IUCN RED LIST CLASSIFICATION**  
**Critically Endangered** Considered to be facing an **extremely high risk** of extinction in the wild

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**Greater one-horned rhino**  
*Rhinoceros unicornis*

**In-situ population\*** 3,588

**IUCN RED LIST CLASSIFICATION**  
**Vulnerable** Considered to be facing a high risk of extinction in the wild

<NT>

**Sumatran rhino**  
*Dicerorhinus sumatrensis*

**In-situ population** <80

**IUCN RED LIST CLASSIFICATION**  
**Critically Endangered** Considered to be facing an **extremely high risk** of extinction in the wild

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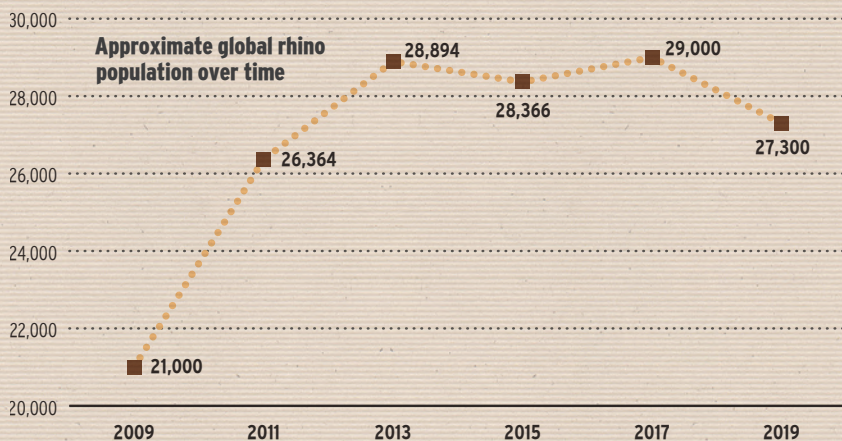
## Rhino conservation: Where we're at

Every 12 hours, a rhino is poached. It's a statistic that's still too high. But this is a huge step forward from just five years ago, when rhino fatalities were much higher: in 2015, on average, a rhino was killed for its horn every six hours.

**W**e're hopeful that this decline in the poaching rate will continue but, of course, we still need huge efforts to protect remaining populations and secure habitats for new breeding groups of the rarest species. Black, Javan and Sumatran rhinos continue to be listed as Critically Endangered by the IUCN, and while their populations are slowly increasing, numbers remain dangerously low.

During the past decade, the worldwide rhino population has increased by 30%, from approximately 21,000 in 2009 to more than 27,700 in 2019. Despite this, the global population has recently dropped by 6%: more rhinos have died since 2017 than have been born, a trend that we, together with other conservation organisations, are trying to reverse.

The global decline adds more intense pressure at an extremely difficult time, as reserves and conservancies struggle with the effects of the coronavirus pandemic. We're hopeful that we have the tools we need to increase the number of rhinos in the world, but we know that there's no room for error: the margins are small and the risks are simply too high.

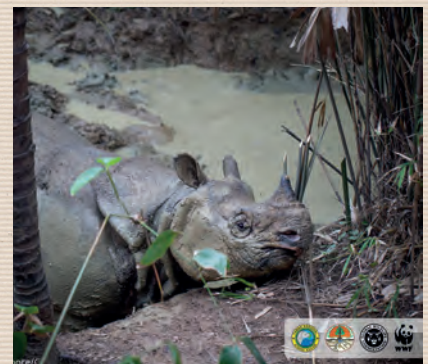


## RHINOS: the global context

**R**hino conservation takes place in the wider context of a global struggle to protect wild places and species. The poaching that threatens rhinos also threatens other species: tigers, like rhinos, are highly prized in Asian markets; around 50 African elephants and 300 pangolins are poached every day; to name but a few.

### Stopping illegal wildlife markets is a top conservation priority.

Meanwhile human encroachment into wild habitats, primarily for food, continues apace. 75% of the Earth's land surface is now substantially degraded, affecting not only rhinos and myriad other species, but also the wellbeing of over three billion people.



ROBIN MOORE/BBC

Such encroachment also leads to outbreaks of zoonotic diseases such as Covid-19. And behind all this, climate change is reaching dangerous levels. There is much hope, not least from the many wonderful people working for conservation and sustainability, but radical change is needed, and the next ten years will be critical.

\*In the countries in which they naturally occur.

## African rhinos

**W**hen the current poaching crisis began in 2008, Zimbabwe was hardest hit: more than 60% of the rhinos poached that year were killed in the country.

Since then, South Africa has continued to suffer more than anywhere else, losing almost 9,000 rhinos in the past decade;

a frightening, but perhaps not surprising, statistic, given that the country is home to three-quarters of Africa's rhinos.

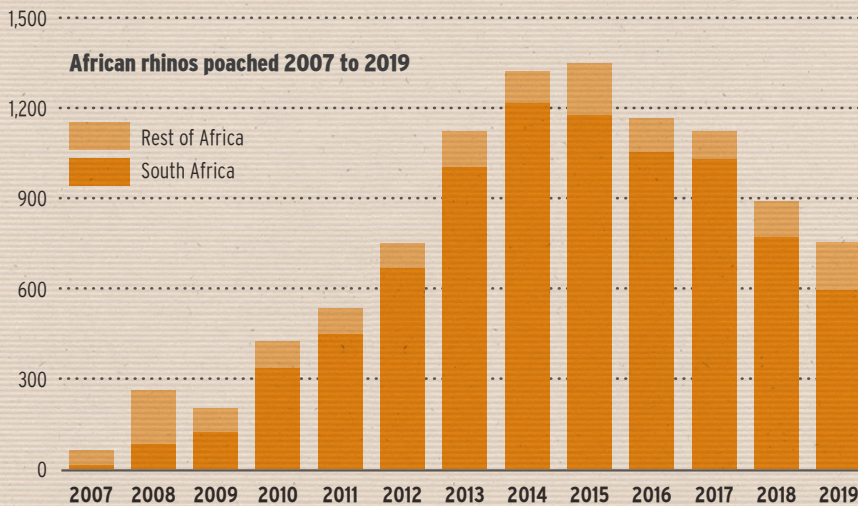
Thankfully, in 2019 we saw South Africa's poaching numbers fall below 1,000 for the second year in a row, dropping to 594. There's no doubt that extensive efforts by rangers and law enforcement teams have played a significant role in driving these numbers down. However, the impact of

such intense poaching since 2008 is taking its toll on rhino populations: there are fewer rhinos left to poach in the first place.

As rangers improve their effectiveness in certain areas, poaching syndicates are being pushed into countries that have not yet built their anti-poaching capacity. In Botswana, a country that has been recently targeted by poaching gangs, the Government has – belatedly some might argue – implemented a national dehorning strategy, in the hope of deterring poachers.

So far in 2020, reports indicate that fewer rhinos have suffered at the fate of poachers, likely thanks to improved tactics by anti-poaching units and enforcement authorities, and the impact of movement restrictions due to Covid-19. But, as much as we'd wish to, we cannot predict the future.

There are major concerns that poaching groups have used the 'quiet' time to ramp up recruitment and strategize for coming months. Combining this with the sudden and catastrophic loss of income that many reserves have suffered due to the overnight drop in tourism, 2021 will bring huge challenges for rhinos – and the people that protect them – across Africa.



## Asian rhinos

**U**nlike their African cousins, Javan, Sumatran and Greater one-horned rhinos haven't experienced the same levels of poaching during recent years, though it remains a significant threat.

The greatest risk to all three species is a lack of suitable, secure habitat, reducing the ability to increase populations' sizes. Thankfully, efforts to increase available space and protect the remaining forest seems to be having an impact for Javan rhinos, as four new calves were spotted by camera traps in late 2019 and two more in 2020, bringing the total population above 70 – an incredible achievement considering that there were fewer than 30 in the 1970s.

This positive news highlights just how important the next step is: securing a suitable second habitat. For now, all 74 Javan rhinos continue to live in just one place, Ujung Kulon National Park, putting the entire species in extreme danger from a disease outbreak or natural disaster.

Unfortunately, there have been no sightings of new Sumatran rhino calves during the past 12 months, but there is increased momentum to ensure a future for the species via the Sumatran Rhino Rescue

Project. Rhino Protection Units continue to patrol throughout Indonesian rainforests, recording all rhino signs, with the hope of rescuing isolated rhinos and bringing them together with others to mate successfully.

While the situation is somewhat different given their total population sits above 3,500, the importance of good habitat cannot be forgotten for Greater one-horned rhinos. The species continues to steadily increase,

but a number of natural deaths in a key area (Chitwan National Park, Nepal) and a spike in poaching incidents in another (Kaziranga National Park, India), brings cause for concern.

Moving rhinos into suitable locations is a crucial next step, as well as reducing human encroachment around current habitats, and stopping poaching attempts before they take hold.



SOHALIWI ZAHAN

# Your CONSERVATION impact

In the past 12 months, despite all of the challenges, there have still been some incredible achievements. Your support, whether you've donated, you're a member, or perhaps you've taken on a fundraising challenge, has made a real difference for our partners across the world.

Here are a few examples of what you've helped to achieve.



## Namibia

### South-western black rhinos increase

Thanks to dedicated conservation efforts, the global population of the South-western black rhino subspecies has grown by more than 11% since 2012. There are now 2,188 South-western black rhinos, most of which reside in Namibia, and the subspecies has been re-classified to a lower category of threat by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

Huge improvements in law-enforcement and anti-poaching activities have been key to the subspecies' success, as have the efforts to ensure that local communities benefit from the rhinos' presence.

Unfortunately, the two other subspecies are still listed as Critically Endangered meaning that, at a species-level, black rhinos continue to be at extremely high risk of extinction in the wild.



## Kenya

### More habitat for Kenya's rhinos

Kenya is a stronghold for the Eastern black rhino subspecies, home to around 75% of the total population (approximately 1,000 are left in total). It's vital that we work to increase the number of this subspecies, but this can only happen if there is enough room for these rhinos to live in the wild.

To provide more suitable and connected habitat, we've been working with conservancies across Kenya's Laikipia County, making plans to expand the areas that black rhinos roam while keeping them safe. Covid-19 has presented some challenges, but the collaboration continues, as we've been working to support the same reserves in securing urgent funding for things like salaries, fuel, rations and general maintenance, after budgets were cut due to the lack of tourism.

To date, we have raised and distributed \$700,000 to support Core Critical Operations Costs, thanks to grants from the Bently Foundation, the Rhino Recovery Fund and ForRangers.

## Viet Nam

### New directive brings us one step closer to stopping illegal wildlife markets

The outbreak of Covid-19 put a spotlight on all forms of wildlife trade, both legal and illegal, increasing pressure on many countries to reaffirm their commitments to clamp down on any trade that threatens endangered species and impacts human health.

In July, we were pleased to hear that the Prime Minister's Office in Viet Nam had issued a Directive suspending all imports of wildlife and wildlife parts, simultaneously expressing determination to end all illegal markets.

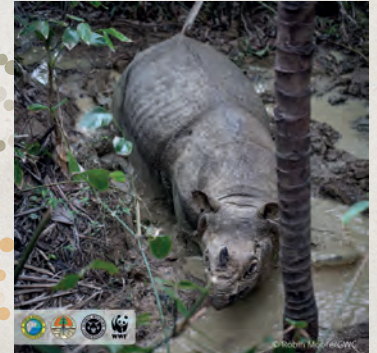
There is still work to do, but the Directive is a significant step forward. Now, we must maintain this momentum to shut down all illegal wildlife markets.



NICK GARBRITT



STEVE AND ANI TOON



CHRISTOPHER M. FAY

## South Africa

### Rhino poaching drops below 600

For the first time since 2011, the number of rhinos poached in South Africa dropped to below 600 in 2019. Whilst this number remains too high, it is significant: since the shocking highs of 2014, poaching rates in the country have halved.

Such a huge shift has only been possible thanks to the commitment of rangers and law enforcement authorities, making sure that rhinos are protected on the ground, and criminals are sentenced appropriately. The threat remains intense but, with regular training and effective equipment for anti-poaching units like those in the places we support (Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park and uMkhuze Game Reserve), we're confident that the number of rhinos poached will continue to fall.

## Indonesia

### Javan rhinos on the rise

Javan rhinos are very rarely seen, even by the rangers who patrol daily within the forests of Ujung Kulon National Park, where the entire population lives. Instead of relying only on rangers' sightings, camera traps are used to help monitor the rhinos within the Park. Late in 2019, there was remarkable footage recovered: four new calves had been spotted! This success continued, as two new calves were seen in September 2020! The total population now sits at 74.

The number of rhinos remains precariously low, but this positive news shows just how important current projects are to provide extra space, giving Javan rhinos a better chance at breeding successfully to continue increasing their population.