



Rhinos and the IUCN Red List

Black rhino
Diceros bicornis

In-situ population¹ 6,195

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

<CR>

White rhino
Ceratotherium simum

In-situ population¹ 15,942

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

The Northern white rhino subspecies is functionally extinct, with only two individuals (both female) left. The Southern white rhino accounts for all other white rhinos.

<NT>

Javan rhino
Rhinoceros sondaicus

In-situ population¹ 76

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

<CR>

Greater one-horned rhino
Rhinoceros unicornis

In-situ population¹ 4,014

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

<NT>

Sumatran rhino
Dicerorhinus sumatrensis

In-situ population¹ Estimated 34–47

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

<CR>

Where we're at

Rhino population estimates have officially been published for all range states (the countries with rhinos) in the last year, with accurate counts to the end of December 2021 reported to CITES² (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species).

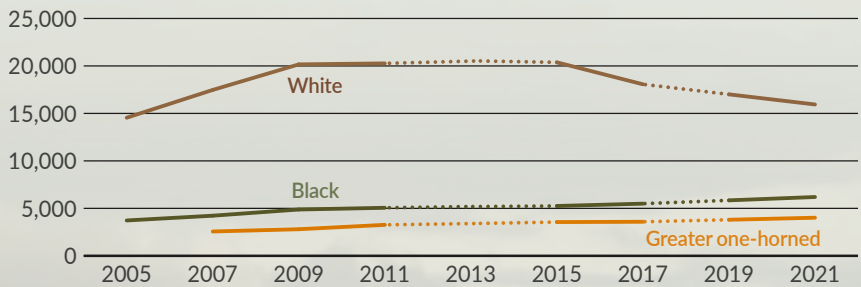
As helpful as updated numbers are, these ones paint a worrying picture. Since 2017, global rhino populations have decreased by approximately 3%. The main reason for the decline is poaching. Specifically, the relentless poaching in South Africa's Kruger National Park, which has caused a drop in the Park's rhino population from an estimated 10,000 in 2010, to around 4,000 now.

Yet, poaching has not been the cause of the recent demise of another rhino species: Sumatran rhinos. While official figures from the Indonesian Government talk of fewer than 80 animals remaining, IUCN's data suggests there may be only 34-47 individuals left. Habitat fragmentation and its impact on

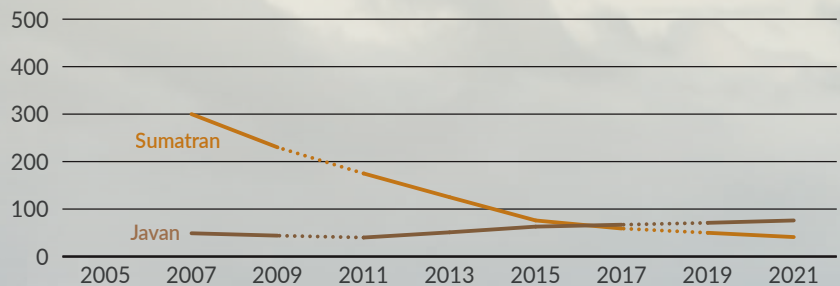
breeding success are pushing the species to the edge of extinction. A glimpse of hope did come in the form of a pitter-patter of rhino feet, however; a Sumatran rhino was born in Indonesia on 24 March 2022.

Thankfully, for the other three rhino species, things are looking up. Populations of Greater one-horned rhinos, Javan rhinos and black rhinos are all increasing. They're by no means out of trouble, but at least we can see the benefits of strategic conservation activities and commitment to supporting each species. Keeping up current momentum is crucial to overcome the threats they, alongside Sumatran and white rhinos, continue to face.

White, Black and Greater one-horned rhino populations 2005–21²



Sumatran and Javan rhino populations 2005–21²



¹In the countries in which they naturally occur.

²Population numbers are as reported to CITES by the African and Asian Rhino Specialist Groups, at the end of December 2021.

Changes in habitat

For those populations where poaching is no longer the biggest concern, a lack of safe, suitable habitat is our biggest problem.

Since 2005, in Kenya and Namibia, black rhinos have increased by 73% and 88% respectively. Given their Critically Endangered status, such growth is crucial, and now, the race is on to make sure there is space for more rhinos in the coming years. This doesn't just mean investing in security to stop poaching. It means researching the ecology of potential sites, working with communities to ensure long-term plans, and connecting current habitats to create a network of rhino reserves.

Since 2005, Kenyan and Namibian black rhinos have increased by 73% and 88% respectively.

In Asia, invasive species are one of the biggest threats to rhino habitats. Even with strong protection by rangers, whole sections of a reserve may be deserted by rhinos if they're overrun with invasive plants, reducing the food availability, and the space for rhinos to roam. Eradicating invasive species is often a manual and long-term job, and therefore, projects to remove plants such as Arenga palm in Indonesia and Cotton-tree flowers in India have become critical conservation activities.

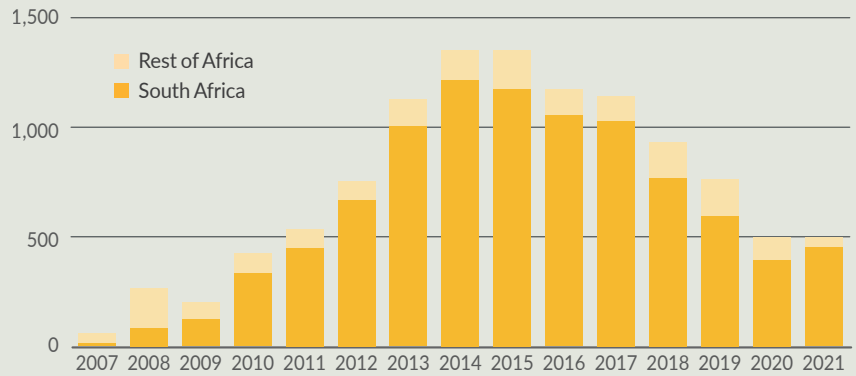
Beyond invasive species, our changing climate is increasingly shifting weather patterns. Droughts and floods have become much more common across rhino range states, each with huge implications for short and long-term food and water security.

As an umbrella species that can boost biodiversity, and in turn, reduce the impacts of climate change and improve ecosystem resilience, protecting rhinos is not only important for them, but for people, wildlife, and our planet.

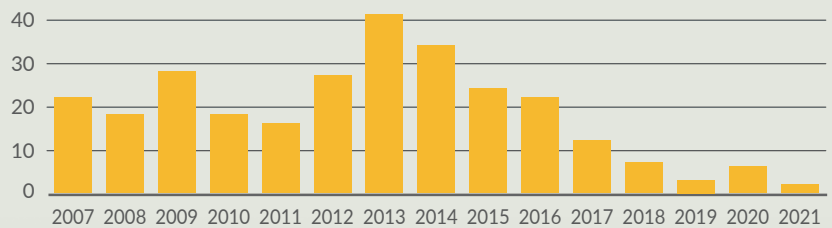


The impact of poaching

African rhinos poached 2007–21²



Greater one-horned rhinos poached 2007–21³



³Estimated data from the Asian Rhino Specialist Group and historic news sources

Since the last official report to CITES (in 2018), poaching has tragically taken the lives of 2,725 rhinos across Africa and Asia. Put simply, too many rhinos are being killed to give them any chance of their numbers increasing. Fortunately, the total is almost a 50% decrease compared to the previous four-year period. However, it doesn't change the impact of the loss, and the cumulative long-term effect is driving rhino numbers (particularly the Southern white rhino population) down.

In South Africa (where 87% of all continental poaching in the last decade has taken place) poaching increased in 2021, following a substantial dip during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic. Thankfully, the overall trend continues to follow the downward trajectory that started in 2015.

Whilst total poaching continues to decline, syndicates in South Africa are changing their tactics. Moving on from the common targets, such as

Kruger National Park, where enforcement is strengthening and rhino numbers have declined, poachers are turning their attention elsewhere. Smaller reserves such as Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park (HiP) in KwaZulu-Natal have recently suffered more intense poaching activity. Providing support to the rangers in HiP is one of our top priorities over the coming months.

Other countries are reporting similar trends. Recent news suggests poaching in Namibia could be increasing in smaller, private reserves. In addition, rhino poaching in Botswana is rising, perhaps because syndicates are moving away from the larger South African reserves.

Of course, poaching doesn't only reduce the current population. It also impacts dependent and future calves if a female rhino is poached. In fact, research on white rhinos in South Africa suggests that poaching has shifted the average reproductive success of a cow (female rhino) from six to just 0.7 calves in their lifetime.