

RHINO



FACTS

Rhinos once roamed many places throughout Europe, Asia, and Africa and were known to early Europeans who depicted them in cave paintings. At the beginning of the 20th century, 500,000 rhinos roamed Africa and Asia. By 1970, rhino numbers dropped to 70,000, and today, as few as 29,000 rhinos remain in the wild. Very few rhinos survive outside national parks and reserves due to persistent poaching and habitat loss over many decades. Three species of rhino—black, Javan, and Sumatran—are critically endangered. population increases. However, the species still remains under threat from poaching for its horn and from habitat loss and degradation.

WHY THEY MATTER

Rhinos share their habitat with a multitude of other plant and animal species. The protection of rhinos also helps protect the ecosystems on which they depend, as well as other species, including elephants, buffalo, large carnivores, and antelopes that share their habitat.

THREATS

Poaching, driven by consumer demand for rhino horn primarily in Asia, poses the biggest threat to rhinos. Most of these horns find their way into the illegal market in Vietnam, where law enforcement is weak and criminal networks grind up the horns to sell for use in traditional medicines or sell them whole as a high-value gift item.

The increase in human populations also puts more pressure on rhino habitats as well, shrinking the living space for rhinos and increasing the likelihood of contact with humans—often with fatal results.

PROTECTION

WWF plays a vital role in the fight to protect rhinos. With nearly 60 years of experience, we know that successful rhino conservation requires a comprehensive approach that brings together the world's leading experts to develop global strategies to save and recover these species.

WWF secures and protects rhino populations and establishes new populations through translocations—the process of moving rhinos from parks with significant populations to others that historically held rhinos but currently do not. We help with community-based conservation approaches for people living in and around important rhino habitats.

We work to curb poaching by implementing innovative technology and building the capacity of government and community rangers on the ground. We also tackle illegal trade of—and demand for—rhino horn through advocacy and strengthening of local and international law enforcement to bring trafficking perpetrators to justice.

All information comes directly from the World Wildlife Fund Website

