



State of the Rhino 2023

For Prelims: Types of Rhinos, World Rhino Day, State of the Rhino Report

For Mains: Conservation Efforts for Wildlife

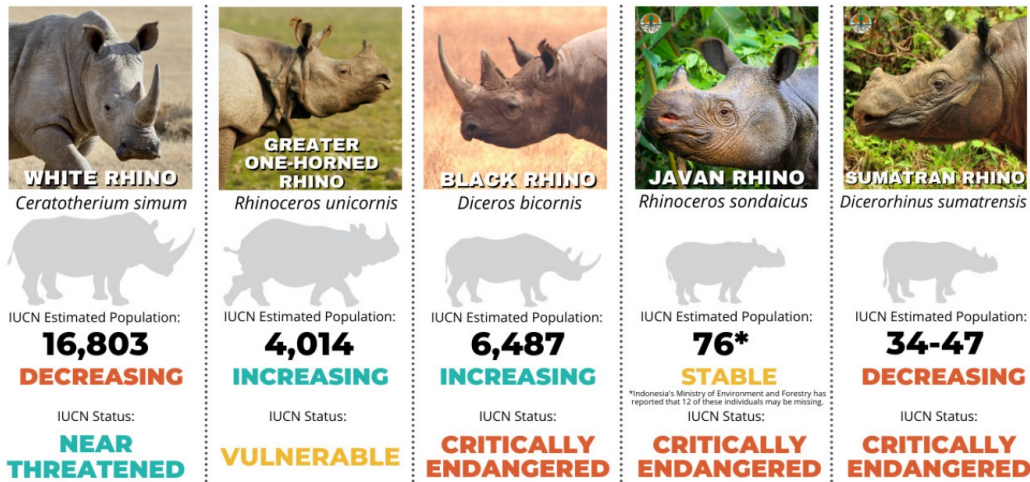
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Why in News?

Recently, the [International Rhino Foundation \(IRF\)](#) published the report, **State of the Rhino, 2023** which documents **current population estimates and trends** for the **five surviving rhino species in Africa and Asia**.

- Every year, [World Rhino Day](#) is observed on **22th September** to spread awareness for all five species of rhino and work being done to save them.
- It was first announced by the [World Wildlife Fund \(WWF\)](#) - South Africa in 2010.

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What are the Key Findings of the Report ?

- **Major Threats:**
 - **Poaching, Habitat Loss:** Poaching still threatens **all five rhino species** and has increased in several regions that had not previously been targeted.
 - **South Africa** continues to **battle devastating poaching losses** of its white rhinos.
 - **Black rhino** populations are increasing despite constant poaching pressure.
 - **Climate Change:**

- **In Africa**, [climate change](#)-induced **drought** is causing myriad detrimental impacts.
- **In Asia** dramatically increased precipitation and longer **monsoon** periods could cause more direct deaths of rhinos and humans alike.
- **Changing weather conditions** and landscapes can also trigger an increase in **invasive plant species**, crowding out or overtaking native rhino food plants and causing general habitat degradation.

▪ **Status of Rhino:**

- **Javan Rhinos:** The status and whereabouts of 12 of the approximately 76 remaining Javan rhinos is **unknown**.
- **Sumatran Rhinos:** Signs of Sumatran rhinos are increasingly **hard to find**, creating more uncertainty about their population in the wild.
- **White Rhinos:** 2,000 white rhinos from **“World’s Largest Rhino Farm”** will now be rewilded throughout Africa.

▪ **Bright Spots:**

- **Greater one-horned rhinos in India and Nepal** continue to thrive due to strong protection .
- **Black rhinos in Africa** are rebounding in the past few decades at a strong growth rate despite still significant poaching losses.
- With the right interventions, all five rhino species can rebound and thrive in our ever changing world.

▪ **Recommendations:**

- Implement a holistic strategy to safeguard rhinos by **addressing poaching, habitat protection, community involvement, capacity building**, demand reduction, advocacy, and wildlife trafficking disruption.



RHINOCEROS

World Rhino Day - 22nd September (declared by WWF in 2010)

5 Main Species of Rhino

Species	Found in	IUCN Red List Status	Habitat
African White	Africa	NT	Long/short grass Savannah
African Black	Africa	CE	Semi-Desert Savannah
Greater one-horned	Asia	Vu (CITES - Appendix I, WPA - Schedule I)	Tropical grassland
Javan	Asia	CE	Tropical, subtropical forests
Sumatran	Asia	CE	Same as Javan

Ujung Kulon National Park (a UNESCO WHS) is home to the last remaining wild Javan rhinos on Earth

Greater One-Horned Rhino

Only species found in India (aka Indian Rhino)

CHARACTERISTICS

- ▶ Largest of the 5 species
- ▶ Identified by a single black horn and a grey-brown hide with skin folds

Threats

- ▶ Poaching for horns
- ▶ Habitat loss
- ▶ Decreasing Genetic diversity

Protected Areas (India)

- ▶ **UP**
 - Dudhwa TR
- ▶ **West Bengal**
 - Jaldapara NP ● Gorumara NP
- ▶ **Assam**
 - Pabitora WLS
 - Orang NP
 - Kaziranga NP (max no. of Rhinos: ~2400)
 - Manas NP

Conservation Efforts (India)

- ▶ National Rhino Conservation Strategy
- ▶ Indian Rhino Vision 2020 (launched in 2005)

New Delhi Declaration on Asian Rhinos 2019

Signed by 5 rhino range nations (India, Bhutan, Nepal, Indonesia and Malaysia)



What are the Conservation Efforts by India ?

- **Translocation:** Rhino translocations to [Manas National Park](#) set for the beginning of 2023 were rescheduled for 2024 while security measures were reinforced after a poached rhino was discovered in January.
- **Rhino Corridor:** In 2022, the Assam government finalized the addition of approximately 200 sq km to [Orang National Park](#) in north-central Assam, more than doubling the size of this protected area and key rhino habitat.
 - With this added land, Orang National Park is now connected to [Burhachapori Wildlife Sanctuary](#) in the east, completing the creation of a linked corridor between all the protected areas in Assam that hold rhinos: [Manas National Park](#), [Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary](#), [Orang National Park](#), the [Laokhowa and Burhachapori Wildlife Sanctuaries](#) and [Kaziranga National Park](#).
- **New Delhi Declaration on Asian Rhinos:** India, Bhutan, Nepal, Indonesia and Malaysia have signed a declaration for the conservation and protection of the species.

- **DNA Profiles of all Rhinos:** The project will help in **curbing poaching** and gathering evidence in wildlife crimes involving rhinos
- **National Rhino Conservation Strategy:** It was **launched in 2019** to conserve the greater one-horned rhinoceros.
- **Indian Rhino Vision 2020:** It was an ambitious effort to attain a wild population of at least 3,000 greater one-horned rhinos spread over seven protected areas in the Indian state of Assam by the year 2020.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims

Q. Consider the following statements: (2019)

1. Asiatic lion is naturally found in India only.
2. Double-humped camel is naturally found in India only.
3. One-horned rhinoceros is naturally found in India only.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (a)

PDF Reference URL: <https://www.drishtiias.com/printpdf/state-of-the-rhino-2023>

