



Connecting conservation  
and communities

Registered Charity no. 1035072

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### Save the Rhino International

Save the Rhino International (SRI), registered as a UK charity in 1994, works to conserve viable populations of critically endangered rhinos in Africa and Asia. We recognise that the future of wildlife is inextricably linked to the communities that share its habitat. By funding field projects and through education, our goal is to deliver material, long-lasting and widespread benefits to rhinos and other endangered species, ecosystems and to the people living in these areas. In summary, we *connect conservation and communities* by working in partnership with 14 local NGOs in Africa and Asia.

Our aims are:

- To increase the number of rhinos in genetically viable populations in the wild
- To enhance the integrity of ecosystems
- To ensure that local communities benefit from conservation activities

#### Problem – rhino threats:

Although protected by international laws rhinos still get poached for their horn within the illegal wildlife trade industry. Three species are defined as "critically endangered" which means they face an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild. There are five rhino species: White (17,500), Black (4,240), Greater one-horned (2,700), Sumatran (275) and Javan (60).

Poaching: Generally speaking, the horn from rhinos killed in East Africa tends to end up in the Yemen, where it is made into ornamental handles for daggers (jambiyas) while horn from rhinos poached in southern Africa (as well as from those poached in Asia) make its way to the Far East where it is used in Traditional Chinese Medicine.

Habitat loss: Habitat loss has also been a key factor in the reduction of rhino numbers, and in recent years increasingly so as the growing human population competes with wildlife for land and natural resource. Clearance of land for human settlement and agricultural production, coupled with unsustainable ways of living and logging (authorised and illegal) are the main contributors to habitat loss and fragmentation.

Political conflict: In some locations, where normal law and order has broken down – particularly in war zones or where there is political instability – it has become much easier for the poachers to kill rhinos and other endangered species. Particular examples include the Democratic Republic of Congo, Zimbabwe and Nepal.

#### Solution –range of projects:

It's not all bad news though, numbers are slowly increasing and with international conservation efforts the species can be saved. And it's not just about the rhino either: rhinos share their home with numerous other wildlife species that benefit from environmental protection too, and local communities find opportunities for poverty reduction through wildlife tourism or better livestock management and other ways of sustainable living.

By funding field projects and through education, Save the Rhino's goal is to deliver material, long-lasting and widespread benefits to rhinos and other endangered species, ecosystems and to the people living in these areas. In summary we connect conservation and communities by working with 14 local NGOs in Africa and Asia.

Save the Rhino focuses its grass-root level support on different approaches:

Anti-poaching and monitoring patrols: Teams which detect and deter poachers and gather information about rhino ranges and numbers; whilst protecting and enhancing whole eco-systems.

Community conservation and development: Programmes that develop sustainable methods by which local communities can creatively manage natural resources.

Environmental education programmes: EEPs teach children and adults about the importance of preserving natural resources and address human-wildlife conflict issues.

Translocations: moving rhino to established populations that are reintroduced to former habitats.

Research: For example, into the threats to rhino survival and alternatives to the use of rhino horn.

Veterinary work: Such as the implanting of transmitters into horns, or removal of snares.

## **Save the Rhino International – Quick Rhino Information.**

There are five species of rhino and eleven subspecies; White, Black, Indian, Sumatran and Javan.

Three of the five species are critically endangered, with the other two vulnerable and near threatened.

Rhinoceros have been around for more than 50 million years, but rhinos could be wiped out in less than 20 years.

The southern white rhino is a great conservation success story. It was thought to be extinct at the end of the 19th century. Nevertheless, a few individuals (50-100) survived in the iMfolozi River valley in South Africa and became subject of intense conservation efforts at the beginning of the 20th century. Thanks to a huge co-operative effort, Southern white rhinos have recovered to 17,500 individuals today.

By saving the rhino not only are we conserving this amazing mega-herbivore but their conservation also means saving large tracts of habitat and therefore entire eco-systems, benefiting hundreds of other species.

Rhinos are the second-biggest living land mammals after the elephants. In the wild, rhinos attract tourists who bring money to national parks and local communities. They are one of the "Big Five", along with lion, leopard, elephant and buffalo. Species such as cheetah and antelope depend on rhinos to clear thorny scrub and spread seeds for regeneration.

Save the Rhino supported projects work to avoid environmental degradation and can offer instead opportunities for sustainable utilisation by local communities and improved ecosystem services.

Poaching for rhino horn is a major threat to the survival of rhinos. In Asia, mainly China, the horn is ground down into pills and used as a fever suppressant.

In The Yemen, in the Middle East, rhino horns are made into dagger handles called Jambiyas, and presented as a traditional gift for boys who have reached manhood.

Another major threat is land encroachment and habitat loss. Their habitat is being eaten away by expanding human populations needing space for residents, growing crops or cattle grazing and also from illegal logging and pollution. This forces rhinos into smaller, fragmented areas which also increases the likelihood of conflict between humans and wildlife.

Political conflict can impact conservation efforts greatly, as instability and weak law enforcement makes it much easier for the poachers to kill rhinos and other endangered species. Particular examples of places where political conflict has been matched by a rise in poaching include the Democratic Republic of Congo, Zimbabwe and Nepal.

During times of national instability it is vital that we protect a nation's wildlife resources and ecosystems as the loss of environmental stability will cause further socio-economic decay and may hinder the nation's recovery and tourism potential.

Saving rhinos also helps to support local communities, many of who rely on wildlife protection programmes to provide jobs and safe environments for their families.