

I AM NOT
MEDICINE.
SAY NO TO
RHINO HORN.



© NATUREPL.COM / ANDY ROUSE / WWF-CANON

AFRICAN RHINOS - THE FACTS

Rhinos once roamed the plains of Africa in their thousands. They have been brought back from the brink of extinction before but sadly once again they are hanging by a thread. WWF and TRAFFIC are working to save these magnificent creatures.



DID YOU KNOW?

Rhinos are one of the 'Big 5' animals popular on African safaris. They contribute to economic growth and sustainable development through the tourism industry, which creates job opportunities and provides tangible benefits to the local communities that live alongside them.

In almost all rhino conservation areas, there are other valuable plants and animals. By protecting rhinos, other species such as elephant, buffalo, predators and small game are often also conserved.

Egrets and oxpeckers are frequently found with rhinos, feeding on the animals' external parasites.

Species	Black or hook lipped rhino <i>(Diceros bicornis)</i>	White or square lipped rhino <i>(Ceratotherium simum)</i>
Subspecies	Southern-western black rhino <i>D. b. bicornis</i> ; southern-central black rhino <i>D. B. minor</i> ; eastern black rhino <i>D. b. michaeli</i> ; west African black rhino <i>D.b. longpipes</i>	Northern white rhino <i>C. s. contoni</i> ; Southern white rhino <i>C. s. simum</i>
IUCN Status	Critically Endangered (CITES Appendix 1)	Near-Threatened
Population	4,800	20,200
Weight	Males 850 - 1,600 kg (an individual weighing 1,800 kg has been recorded); females are smaller than males	Males typically weigh 2,000 - 2,300 kg (the heaviest recorded weighed 4,600 kg, females 1,600 kg)
Horn size	The front horn typically measures about 50 cm (the rear horn of the south-western black rhino is usually longer than the front one). The world-record horn length is 136 cm	The front horn (average length 90 cm) is larger than the rear horn. The world-record is a female with a front horn 158 cm long and 76.5 cm in circumference
Lifespan	30 - 45 years	40 - 45 years
Feeding	Browsers - the prehensile upper lip is used to gather leaves and twigs	Grazers - preferring to feed on short or leafy grass
Shoulder height	150 - 175 cm	Males up to 200 cm; females up to 177 cm
Breeding	Females typically breed from 7 years and males from about 8 years. A single calf is born after 15 months. A new calf is produced every 22-44 months, by which time the previous offspring has become independent.	Females can breed from 4 years, whereas males hold territories from about 12.5 years. A single calf is born after 16 months. Calves are weaned after a year and become independent at 2-3 years.

FACING A CRISIS

In 2012, 668 rhinos were illegally killed in South Africa equal to an average of almost two rhinos killed per day. Poaching levels have risen by a staggering 5000% since 2007 when just 13 rhinos were killed.

The demand for rhino horn is the greatest threat to the survival of this species with Asia and especially Viet Nam being the main market.

The escalating rhino poaching crisis in South Africa is linked to the demand for rhino horn as an ingredient in traditional medicine and as a status symbol of wealth and power.

There are traditional medicines that have proven to be effective for treating a variety of ailments and symptoms and have saved millions of lives. Rhino horn is not one of them. Despite the facts, widespread lies, myths and rumours are fuelling demand and use of rhino horn.

In traditional medicine, rhino horn is used to treat a long list of ailments: from fever to hallucinations and headaches. In recent years, use of rhino horn in Viet Nam among the middle and upper class appears to have expanded. Rhino horn mixed with water or alcohol has been used as a detoxifying beverage to treat hangovers. Media reports have included statements referring to the benefits of rhino horn in regards to treating cancer. But there is no evidence to support this belief.

To feed the demand poachers have evolved from using bows, arrows and spears to using high-powered rifles, helicopters, night vision equipment and veterinary tranquilizers. Some poachers are now putting poison on rhino carcasses to kill feeding vultures whose presence could call attention to the location.

Illegal wildlife trade is frequently associated with other criminal activities, including illicit arms and drug trade, corruption and money laundering. It is also known to help finance regional conflicts and even terrorism.

For more information

Please contact:

Tú Nguyễn Thị

tu.nguyen@wwfgreatermekong.org

Alegria Olmedo

alegria.olmedo@traffic.org

Join the conversation:

facebook.com/VietnamWWF

facebook.com/Trafficsea

© Oct. 2013 TRAFFIC. All rights reserved



©BRENT STIRTON/GETTY IMAGES/WWF-UK

Female survives brutal de-horning

In 2012, a female rhino and her 4 week old calf were attacked by poachers in a helicopter. They took off the female's horn with a chainsaw and left her to die. She was found the next day in unimaginable pain. Her baby calf was separated during the incident and died of starvation and thirst.

The good news is the mother miraculously survived the dehorning, and with intensive care and veterinary supervision has gone on to join up with a male bull rhino.

Vietnamese entanglement

June 2008- five white rhinoceros horns weighing nearly 18 kg were seized from a Vietnamese man at Tan Son Nhat Airport;

April 2009- a Vietnamese man was arrested in Pretoria in South Africa after rhinoceros body parts were found at his home;

August 2011- a Vietnamese man found guilty of illegally possessing 12 rhinoceros horns received a 12-year prison sentence;

November 2012- 23.5 kg of rhino horn was seized from two Vietnamese passengers at Noi Bai airport;

January 2013- two Vietnamese men were detained on the same day in Ho Chi Minh City and Bangkok for trafficking rhino horns weighing 16.5 kg and 10.6 kg respectively.



© BYRON DU PREZZ / TRAFFIC



WORKING TOGETHER
TO TACKLE ILLEGAL
AND UNSUSTAINABLE
WILDLIFE TRADE

TRAFFIC
the wildlife trade monitoring network