

IUCN SSC Asian Rhino Specialist Group

2019 Report



Bibhab Kumar Talukdar

Chair

Bibhab Kumar Talukdar (1)

Red List Authority Coordinator

Susie Ellis Wildt (2)

Location/Affiliation

(1) Aaranyak, 50 Samanwoy Path (Survey),
Guwahati 781 028, India
(2) International Rhino Foundation

Number of members

59

Social networks

Facebook:

Asian Rhino Specialist Group

Website:

<https://rhinos.org/research-publications/iucn-asian-rhino-specialist-group/>



Mission statement

Foster conservation and management of three species of Asian rhinos and their habitats.

Projected impact for the 2017-2020 quadrennium

In the 2nd Asian Rhino Range States Meeting that ASRSG organised at New Delhi, India, from 26-28 February 2019, all five Asian Rhino range states attended and decided to secure the future of all three species of Asian Rhinos by adopting the New Delhi Declaration on Asian Rhino Conservation. The Greater One Horned Rhino was downlisted from "EN" to VU" in IUCN Red Lists in 2008 as its status improved, which reflects the true sense of conservation success. However, Critically Endangered Sumatran and Javan Rhino, currently found in Indonesia, continue to face diverse challenges. IUCN/SSC along with NatGeo, International Rhino Foundation, Global Wildlife Conservation and WWF joined hands with Indonesia's Ministry for Environment and Forestry to launch Sumatran Rhino Rescue Project in July 2019 to make extra efforts to save Sumatran Rhinos. Interactions among ASRSG members have also contributed new ideas to secure the three species of Asian Rhinos in the wild.

Targets for the 2017-2020 quadrennium

Plan

Planning: (1) initiate preparation of Javan Rhino (*Rhinoceros sondaicus*) Conservation Plan; (2) initiate preparation of Sumatran Rhino (*Dicerorhinus sumatrensis*) Conservation Plan; (3) initiate preparation of Greater One-horned Rhino (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) Conservation Plan.

Policy: hold the 2nd Asian Rhino Range States Meeting.

Activities and results 2019

Plan

Planning

i. Collation of information needed for various chapters of Javan Rhino Conservation Plan in progress. The content of various chapters are being assigned and maps and other materials are being prepared for Javan Rhino distribution. (KSR #15)

ii. Collation of information needed for various chapters of Sumatran Rhino Conservation Plan in progress. Since Sumatran Rhino is currently found in Indonesia only, discussion with Ministry for Environment and Forestry is also on as the country itself is making an emergency action plan for Sumatran Rhino, because the species is currently in need of urgent attention. The contents of various chapters are being assigned and maps and other materials are being prepared for Sumatran Rhino distribution. (KSR #15)

iii. Collation of info needed for various chapters of Greater One Horned Rhino Conservation Plan in progress. The contents of various chapters are being assigned and maps and other materials are being prepared for Greater One Horned Rhino distribution in India and Nepal. (KSR #15)

Policy

i. The 2nd Asian Rhino Range States Meeting was attended by about 55 participants from five Asian Rhino range countries and also from US and Venezuela. In this 2nd Asian Rhino Range States Meeting, India launched its National Conservation Strategy for the Indian One Horned rhinoceros. The purpose of this meeting was: (1) facilitate information sharing and promote collaboration between range states in order to raise the level of political commitment to save the three species of Asian Rhino, (2) agree on specific priorities and measures to conserve the three Asian Rhino



Vulnerable Greater One-horned Rhino,
Rhinoceros unicornis
Photo: Bibhab Kumar Talukdar



Critically Endangered Sumatran Rhinoceros,
Dicerorhinus sumatrensis
Photo: Bibhab Kumar Talukdar

species effectively. The government delegates from Bhutan, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Nepal agreed to the following strategic actions outlined below and signed the New Delhi Declaration on Asian Rhinos 2019 on 28th February 2019 at Ganga Auditorium, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, New Delhi. The 12 agreed points are as follows: (1) collaborate to strengthen protection regimes, intelligence gathering, and real-time sharing of intelligence information on rhino crime and its horn trade to secure the rhino population within and between range countries; (2) initiate research on various habitat parameters, including invasive species threatening the suitable habitats of Asian rhinos and take appropriate steps to optimally manage the habitats; (3) explore possibilities of expanding rhino ranges within country or between rhino range countries for optimal population management; (4) strengthen transboundary collaboration among India, Nepal, and Bhutan for the greater One-horned Rhino conservation and protection; (5) identify connectivity and corridors across international


boundaries and keep them functional, safe and secure for free movement of Asian rhinos and other wildlife; (6) increase the engagement of the local communities as stewards to secure the future of rhinos in range countries; (7) initiate proactive monitoring on potential adverse impacts of climate change on rhino health and their habitats in range countries; (8) undertake studies on rhino health issues and potential diseases and take necessary steps for management intervention; (9) regularly organize exposure visits for managers and frontline staffs of the rhino range countries and to document the best practices for wider dissemination; (10) collaborate and strengthen wildlife forensics for the purpose of investigation; (11) accelerate natural and conservation breeding of Critically Endangered Sumatran Rhino, including best use of all available individuals and technologies; (12) call to the attention of all countries that possible opening of international trade of rhino horn and other derivatives will have a severe detrimental impact on rhino populations in Asian rhino range countries. (KSR# 26, 27).

Acknowledgements

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Summary of activities 2019

Components of Species Conservation Cycle: 1/5

Plan 4 

Main KSRs addressed: 15, 26, 27

KSR: Key Species Result



Species

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Key Biodiversity Area Programme

