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Mongabay Series: [Asian Rhinos](#)

Javan rhino found dead in Indonesia, bringing global population down to 68

by **Basten Gokkon** on 30 April 2019

- *The body of a juvenile male Javan rhinoceros was discovered last month in a mud pit in Ujung Kulon National Park, the sole remaining habitat for the species.*
- *The death of the rhino, known as Manggala, brings the known global population of his species down to 68 individuals.*
- *The body was intact when found, and preliminary investigations indicated the rhino did not die due to an infectious disease. A detailed post-mortem is being conducted, with results expected May 7.*
- *The body bore multiple wounds, leading park officials to suspect Manggala may have been attacked by an adult rhinoceros.*

A juvenile male Javan rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros sondaicus*) was found dead last month in Indonesia's Ujung Kulon National Park, home to the only remaining population of the nearly extinct species.

The discovery of the rhino's body brings the current estimate of the critically endangered species' global population to 68 individuals.

A rhino protection unit discovered the rhino's body in a mud pit in the park on March 21, according to a [statement](#) released April 30 by Indonesia's environment ministry.

The animal was identified as a young male named Manggala, believed to have died about 12 hours before its body was found. A preliminary post-mortem examination by a group of conservationists and veterinarians indicated that the rhino did not die from an infectious disease and that its body was still intact; the rhino was too young to have a fully developed horn.

However, officials found at least seven wounds on the surface of the rhino's body. "Manggala is suspected of having been attacked by an adult rhinoceros," Anggodo, head of Ujung Kulon National Park, told Mongabay's [Indonesian sister site](#). The wounds do not appear to have been inflicted by weapons, he said.



A rhino protection unit discovered the body of a juvenile male Javan rhino in a mudpit it Ujung Kulon on March 21, 2019. Image courtesy of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry of Indonesia.

Bone and tissue samples were taken to allow authorities to conduct a deeper investigation into the cause of death. The government says results are expected to be available by May 7.

“The birth and death of wildlife is part of population dynamics in the wild,” the official statement [read](#).

Last year, two Javan rhinos were found dead from natural causes, but officials reported four births (two males and two females). The estimated population of the Javan rhino is now at a minimum 68 individuals: 57 adults and 11 juveniles. Overall, there are believed to be 37 males and 31 females living in Ujung Kulon.

While conservationists are heartened by evidence that the Ujung Kulon population is continuing to breed, calls are mounting for the Indonesian government to establish a second site for the species. A [tsunami](#) struck the Ujung Kulon area in December 2018, and although no rhinos are known to have been killed or injured in the incident, it highlighted the peril facing a species confined to a single habitat. Experts also fear that an outbreak of [infectious disease](#) in Ujung Kulon could wipe out the remaining rhinos.



The death of the young male, known as Manggala, brings the global population of Javan rhinos down to 68. An adult male was found dead of natural causes in April 2018, and a female in July 2018. Image courtesy of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry of Indonesia.

Updated May 2, 2019, at 12:30 UTC: This article has been updated to include a statement by Anggoto regarding wounds on the rhino's body, and to clarify that the young rhino did not have a fully developed horn.