

Rhino poached to extinction in Vietnam: WWF

October 25 2011



This handout photo from the WWF shows a video grab of a Javan rhino and a male calf captured by hidden cameras in the rhino sanctuary in Ujung Kulon National Park on November 22, 2010. The critically endangered species of rhino has been poached to extinction in Vietnam, wildlife groups said Tuesday after the country's last Javan rhino was found dead with its horn hacked off.

A critically endangered species of rhino has been poached to extinction in Vietnam, wildlife groups said Tuesday after the country's last Javan

rhino was found dead with its horn hacked off.

The Javan rhinoceros was pronounced extinct in Vietnam by WWF and the International Rhino Foundation (IRF) after all dung samples in a 2009 and 2010 survey at Cat Tien National Park -- the only known habitat -- were confirmed to have been from the animal.

"The last Javan rhino in Vietnam has gone," said Tran Thi Minh Hien, WWF Vietnam country director. "Vietnam has lost part of its [natural heritage](#)."

In a new report, WWF suggests poaching was the likely cause of death for the rhino, which was found in April 2010 with a bullet in its leg and its horn removed in the national park in southern Vietnam, around 160 kilometres (100 miles) from Ho Chi Minh City.

The group said "ineffective protection by the park was ultimately the cause of the [extinction](#)" and warned that illegal hunting to supply the [wildlife trade](#) threatened the futures of other rare animals in the country.



Map showing the last remaining habitat of the Javan rhino, after the species was confirmed to be locally extinct in Vietnam, the last individual having been shot for its horn.

"The tragedy of the Vietnamese Javan rhinoceros is a sad symbol of this extinction crisis," said Nick Cox of WWF's species programme in the Greater Mekong.

He said efforts to protect natural habitat and deter poaching "were inadequate to save the Javan rhino" in the country and predicted the "continued situation will no doubt lead to the extinction of many more species in Vietnam".

The rhinoceros was believed to be extinct on mainland Asia until 1988 when one of the animals was hunted from the Cat Tien area, leading to the discovery of a small population.

Javan [rhinos](#) are critically endangered, with barely 50 individuals left in a single group in a small [national park](#) in Indonesia.

WWF said Asia's voracious demand for rhino horn for [traditional medicine](#) continues to increase every year, meaning "protection and expansion of the Indonesian population is the highest priority".

The group said other species on the verge of extinction in Vietnam include the tiger, Asian elephant and Siamese crocodile.

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Citation: Rhino poached to extinction in Vietnam: WWF (2011, October 25) retrieved 19 September 2024 from

<https://phys.org/news/2011-10-rhino-poached-extinction-vietnam-wwf.html>

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