

## Check your understanding



**1** Why can't you find rhinos in the wild anymore?

**Answer** Rhinos have been killed in huge numbers by poachers, who hunt and kill them for their horns. The horn is cut off and the animal is often left to die. These illegal hunters want the horns because it sells for a lot of money on the black market. Also, destruction of habitats has caused rhino numbers to decline. Both facts cause rhinos to only survive in heavily protected areas.

**2** What did our numbers show about poaching of white and black rhinos in Kruger Park?

**Answer** The rate of poached rhinos went down for both rhino species over the duration of our study. That means that efforts to protect rhinos and keep most poachers out of the park have been increasingly successful.

**3** How were white rhinos impacted by the drought that occurred in 2015/16 in Kruger Park?

**Answer** Fewer white rhinos were born, and more died of natural causes.

**4** What impact did the drought have on black rhinos? How can you explain the different effect on the white rhinos?

**Answer** Black rhinos did not seem to be affected by the drought. Their birth rates increased, and natural death rates declined. We think this is because black rhinos don't graze as white rhinos do, but instead eat leaves from shrubs and trees. These plants are less affected by the drought than grasses and low vegetation that the white rhinos need.

**5** What did our results show about overall population trends of white and black rhinos in Kruger Park?

**Answer** Our results show that birth rates for white rhinos went down, while overall death rates stayed the same. That means that the overall number of white rhinos went down over the duration of our study. For black rhinos, the trends were reversed: overall death rates went down, while birth rates went up. Those numbers tell us that populations of black rhinos are increasing.

**6** What can you do to help protect rhinos and other wild animals?

**Answer** Continue to educate yourself about rhinos, their biology and habitat. Never buy any wildlife products that are illegal and caused the animal to die in their production, like rhino horns, many animal skins, etc