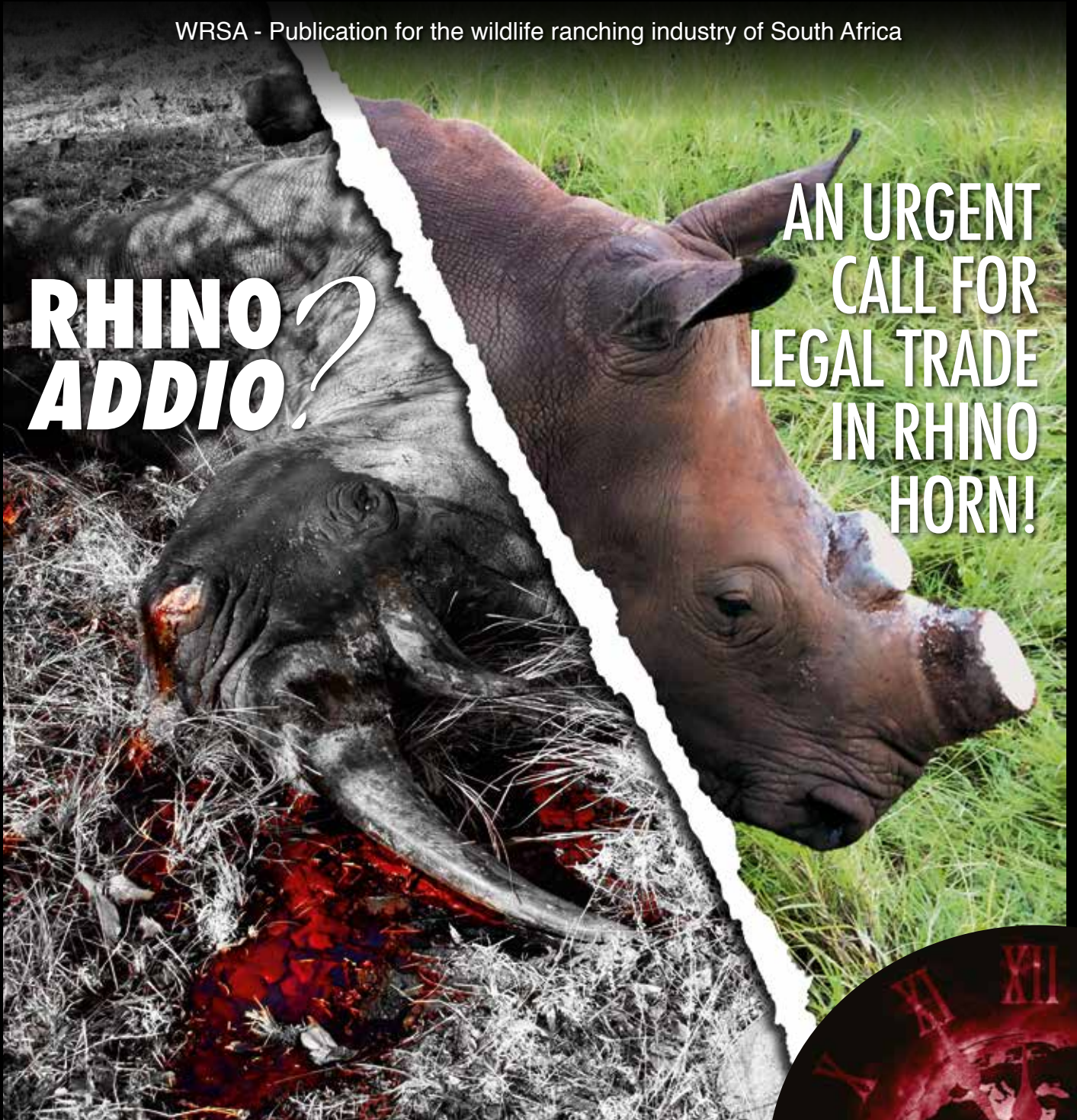


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**RHINO
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**AN URGENT
CALL FOR
LEGAL TRADE
IN RHINO
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Supporting the protection of South Africa's Rhino



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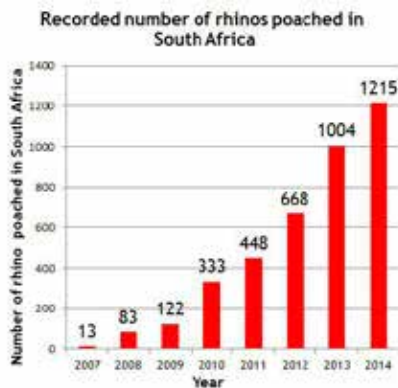
DR PETER OBEREM – PRESIDENT OF WILDLIFE RANCHING SOUTH AFRICA.



HITTING HOME FOR DR PETER OBEREM. THERE WAS A FULL MOON ON FRIDAY, 6 APRIL 2012 (REFERRED TO AS 'POACHER'S MOON'). EASTER SUNDAY MORNING ON 8 APRIL 2012: BRAVE BERTIE, STANDING BY HIS MOTHER BERTHA'S SIDE HOURS AFTER A POACHING INCIDENT, LIMPOPO, SOUTH AFRICA.



THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES (CoP) WILL TAKE PLACE IN JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA FROM 24 SEPTEMBER TO 5 OCTOBER 2016. A VITAL OPPORTUNITY FOR AN URGENT CALL FOR LEGAL TRADE IN RHINO HORN!



JANUARY 2015. THE SOUTH AFRICAN DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS RELEASED SHOCKING POACHING STATISTICS FROM SOUTH AFRICA, WHICH SHOW THAT A RECORD 1 215 RHINOS WERE ILLEGALLY KILLED IN THE COUNTRY IN 2014. THAT'S ONE RHINO POACHED EVERY EIGHT HOURS. IN 2007, JUST 13 RHINOS WERE POACHED FOR THEIR HORNS, BUT SINCE THEN A TOTAL OF 3 886 RHINOS HAVE BEEN SLAUGHTERED IN SOUTH AFRICA ALONE, AN INCREASE OF OVER 9 300%!

FOREWORD

by Dr Peter Oberem -
President of Wildlife Ranching South Africa (WRSA)

“Those that fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it,” Winston Churchill said. His adage has rarely been as appropriate as it is today when we consider the desperate plight of the rhino. It is unfortunate for the rhino, and for those who care, that there is no longer any more room or time left for mistakes. The very existence of the species is under serious threat. The old conventional methods of protecting the rhino have over the past decade proven to be unaffordable, unsustainable and completely ineffective in stemming the losses, which are mainly due to poaching. Perhaps the remarkable successes in increasing the numbers of rhino in South Africa, which is a result of good cooperation between government and private game ranchers, have lulled us into complacency. It is time to rethink.

In broad terms, the answer is simple: there is no single measure that will on its own be successful and sustainable. Those of us who care, and private game ranchers who show their commitment to the species and conservation as a whole by footing the enormous security bill with little or no return, have to employ all measures that:

Increase the risk to the poacher using:

- Increased preventative security (at a huge cost)
- Increased and improved policing and forensics
- Better prosecutions
- Stiffer penalties

Decrease the benefit to the poacher by:

- Reducing demand, if at all possible, as I equate the difficulty of changing deeply ingrained, 5 000-year-old cultural practices with changing views on the big religions of our world, which are only 2 000 years old.
- Creating a reduction in price (not easy due to the limited amount of horn available by the illegal route – in fact, our increased risk strategy actually works against this concept).
- Creating a legal, well-controlled rhino-horn trade. This will have very many positive effects, not least for the poor rural communities in regions where rhino are still found, and for those who today are struggling to meet the huge financial demands of protecting our dwindling asset without compensation.

It is now time to ensure we learn from the mistakes of history, forget about everyone's own particular preferences, and use all the tools available to us before it is too late for these iconic species.

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WHITE RHINOCEROS OR SQUARE-LIPPED RHINOCEROS (*CERATOTHERIUM SIMUM*).



INTRODUCTION

by Dr John Hanks

It should by now be evident that there is no single solution to addressing the growing illegal trade in rhino horn, in spite of some of the simplistic options promoted by genuinely concerned individuals sickened by the reports of appalling suffering by rhinos at the hands of poachers. Unfortunately, the strong case that is being presented for a legal trade in rhino horn is being seriously undermined by individuals and NGOs who are against any form of wildlife utilisation, including hunting and trade in animal parts, even if both are run to the highest standards of sustainability. Their arguments and criticisms come at a time when representatives of Africa's

range states should be showing a much more unified approach to recommending solutions to rhino poaching.

The continent's national parks and game reserves should be at the forefront of efforts to guarantee the long-term security of species and landscapes, particularly threatened species such as black and white rhino, *but their ability to do so is being seriously compromised by a*

major shortfall in financial support for virtually all of those designated and listed by IUCN. This highly unsatisfactory situation is compounded by a lack of political commitment to biodiversity conservation (regrettably to be expected when governments find it impossible to meet the most basic of service delivery demands). Added to this are inadequate law enforcement and the continued alienation of adjacent



EXCESSIVE BLOOD LOSS AND CHOP MARKS TO THE FACE INDICATE THE ESCALATION OF CRUELTY BEING SEEN AT CRIME SCENES WHERE HORNS ARE REMOVED WHILE THE ANIMALS ARE STILL ALIVE. POACHERS ARE BECOMING HESITANT TO SHOOT NUMEROUS SHOTS AND RISK BEING DETECTED BY RANGERS, CHOOSING RATHER TO INCAPACITATE WITH BLOWS TO THE SPINE OR CUTTING OF THE ACHILLES IF THE ANIMAL WASN'T KILLED OUTRIGHT.

Image supplied by Elise Daffue, StopRhinoPoaching.com



We must expect poaching to continue increasing as poachers take much greater risks for their financial return.



rural communities (the majority of whom are living in poverty) by punitive measures to protect wildlife, which in too many cases make little or no attempt to help these people develop alternative sustainable livelihoods.

Early in March 2015, a set of recommendations on engaging communities in combating the illegal wildlife trade (IWT) at the source was issued by a group of more than 70 researchers, community representatives, government officials, UN agencies and NGOs from five continents. The report recognised the central role of the communities that live close to wildlife in addressing and combating IWT, and made the important point of the paramount importance of responding to community rights, recognising the distinction between IWT and legitimate, sustainable use and trade of wild resources. The lesson here for all concerned with rhino

poaching is that the engagement of communities is crucial for success in reducing poaching and the illegal wildlife trade.

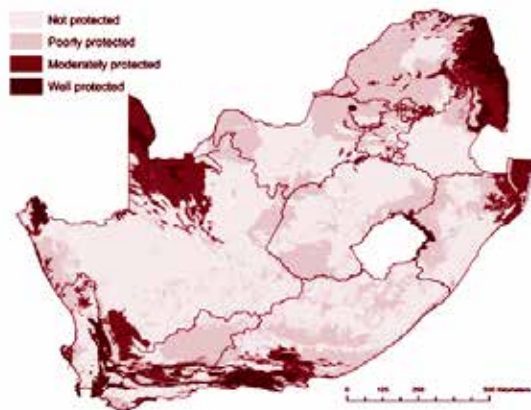
Nobody can deny that the trade ban, which has been in place since the 1970s, has not stopped poaching, nor can anyone deny that the demand for rhino horn is higher than it has ever been, with prices rising all the time – an indication that the product is becoming scarce and more difficult to obtain. We must expect poaching to continue increasing as poachers take much greater risks for their financial return.

If South Africa, with a GNP per capita 10 times higher than Zambia, has to turn to substantial international assistance to maintain its protected areas and conserve its rhino populations, what hope do other countries have without similar massive injections of cash? Enhanced field security means

more, better-trained and better-equipped staff, as well as access to the new generation of advanced surveillance techniques such as UAVs, which are not cheap. All of these come at a massive cost, which drains already limited resources available to State-protected areas and private landowners.

These demands are unlikely to be reduced in the near future and, unless commitments are made to sustain enhanced security at this new level, the loss of rhinos will continue. In other words, with growing donor fatigue, this is not a sustainable option as there is no guaranteed source of income for rhino populations in most of the state and private land areas.

Could a strictly controlled legal trade in rhino horn offer a viable alternative to the existing policy thrust? No matter what punitive or prohibitive measures we introduce, rhinos and many other wildlife



THIS IMAGE IS OF MATSULU ON THE SOUTHWESTERN BORDER OF THE KRUGER. IT WAS TAKEN DECEMBER 2013.

species will continue to dwindle unless we have a fundamental rethink on the way forward. A legal trade in rhino horn deserves serious consideration as a new approach. South Africa can and should present a very strong case to CITES for a legal trade that will benefit agencies responsible for protected areas, the private landowners with rhinos and the communities living adjacent to areas with rhinos, but can expect serious opposition from animal rights bodies and NGOs that have no responsibility for wildlife management.

Any legal trade in rhino horn will have to be agreed by a two-thirds majority at the next CITES CoP in 2016, and South Africa should be well prepared for this by initiating an international advocacy campaign on the benefits of a legal trade as soon as possible. We need to stress that the purpose of CITES is not to ban such trade, as CITES made abundantly clear in its strategic vision with the following wording:

“Conserve biodiversity and contribute to its sustainable use by ensuring that no species of wild fauna or flora becomes or remains subject to unsustainable exploitation through international



RHINO IN PRIVATE OWNERSHIP, LIMPOPO, SOUTH AFRICA.





trade, thereby contributing to the significant reduction of the rate of biodiversity loss.”

Thus CITES recognises that a trade in wildlife species is indeed an option for its conservation.

In summary, what would be the advantages of a strictly controlled legal trade?

- Rhino horn could be supplied without killing a single animal, as horns regrow and produce about one kilogram per year in males and 600g a year in females. As an alternative to an annual cut, horn can be shaved off in much smaller quantities throughout the year. More importantly, live rhinos would be more valuable than dead rhinos, which is not the case at present.

- The trade in horns would be brought out into the open, with transparency on horn prices. Linked to this would be the ongoing monitoring of consumer demand relative to supply, enabling the rhino ‘owners’ to respond immediately to



changing market conditions related directly to consumer demand.

- Those who have rhinos on their land urgently need mechanisms for funding *that are likely to be financially sustainable*, and not having to rely on donations, which are fickle and unreliable. By becoming active market participants, those responsible for rhino conservation would be able to generate a substantial income from these animals that could be 100 times higher than that generated from domestic stock.

- Rhino horn stockpiles held by conservation agencies and private landowners could be fed into the market, removing the high costs and security risks associated with maintaining them. (More attention needs to be given now to managing these stockpiles to ensure that the horns do not deteriorate but remain acceptable to end-users.)

- A significantly increased and potentially ongoing source of supply should greatly reduce the incentives for speculative stockpiling by criminals, because a legal supply would deliver rhino horn more reliably and cost-effectively than the illegal trade.

- A controlled legal trade should encourage other private landowners

and, importantly, local communities, to obtain and maintain their own rhino populations, and to start breeding from them, which should have a significant impact on helping to increase rhino numbers.

It is important to stress, however, that most proponents of the legal trade have drawn attention to the following:

- If the legal trade led to an increase in poaching, the legal trade could be either closed down or restructured. Serious proponents of the trade have never suggested that a legal trade would put a stop to poaching.

- Much of course will depend on how the legal market is established, because it will be essential to try to eliminate the laundering of illegal stocks, as legalising trade could simply create two parallel markets – legal and illegal – which will operate alongside each other. Michael Eustace has presented a proposal on how such a market could be established on page 42.

- No pro-trade motivations state that if there is a legal trade it would be promoted by the producers for its therapeutic properties – in other

words, those promoting the trade have not said that they are doing so because they believe that rhino horn has medicinal properties.

- Furthermore, nobody from the pro-trade lobby has suggested that all remaining rhinos be ‘farmed like cattle’. With the anticipated increase in the number of rhinos on private land and in communal areas, much of the regular harvesting could occur there, with some being added from state-protected areas where animals might still be vulnerable to ongoing poaching threats, and ideally away from those parts most often visited by tourists.

Persisting with the present range of options will only be possible with substantial ongoing financial support (not just for Kruger National Park ('KNP' or 'Kruger') but for other areas too), and in the interim we will have to witness the further mutilation and killing of rhinos, the loss of life of game guards and poachers, and scarce human and financial resources being moved away from other priority conservation concerns. *Surely the legal trade option deserves a resolute and more dispassionate and tolerant consideration as a sustainable solution if rhinos are to survive?*



CRITICALLY ENDANGERED BLACK RHINOCEROS OR HOOK-LIPPED RHINOCEROS (*DICEROS BICORNIS*).



MAVUSO MSIMANG

Mavuso Msimang was formerly CEO of SANParks for six years and retains his interest in nature conservation, serving on the boards of organisations such as the isiMangaliso Wetland Park in KwaZulu-Natal, WWF South Africa, the Peace Parks Foundation and African Parks. He is currently SANParks' rhino conservation issue manager. He holds a BSc in entomology.

For more information, visit: <http://www.tambofoundation.org.za/trustees>



A PRO-TRADE agenda

by Mavuso Msimang

THE 17TH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES (CoP) WILL TAKE PLACE IN JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA FROM 24 SEPTEMBER TO 5 OCTOBER 2016 AND WILL BRING THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY TOGETHER TO TACKLE THE WORLD'S BIGGEST WILDLIFE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES.

Photo by Africanmoose.



The ban on the trade in rhino horn was instituted in 1977 and yet, 38 years later, it is very clear that the objective of the ban – that is, to save the rhino from being hunted for its horn – has been unsuccessful. Year after year, there has been a serious escalation in rhino poaching, in spite of the South African government and others involved in protecting the species doing everything they can to put a stop to it. The justice system, the police, and the courts have all been aligned as never before in South Africa, to make sure that anyone who is caught killing rhino illegally is successfully prosecuted and punished, but even this has not been enough to stop poaching.

I am convinced that neighbouring communities are the vital link in the war against rhino poaching. When I took over as CEO for SA National Parks (SANParks) in 1997, the hostility between the people that live in these communities and the Kruger

National Park was terrible. We started a programme that was meant to create an interest in the value of KNP to these residents by encouraging them to grow things that they could sell to the restaurants in KNP and be trained in road construction and maintenance.





Communities have traditionally attached a very strong value to wildlife. For example, they called a buffalo 'nyati', a totem for them, which they respect and look after in a particular way.

If we do bring back the element of community involvement, we are actually helping people recall their traditional practices and values in a harmonious relationship with wildlife, contributing tremendously to saving many species, particularly the rhino.

A legal trade in rhino horn (in which not a single animal would need to be killed) would enable the government to free up substantial funding for many other conservation priorities as rhinos would have a real value and pay for their own security.





"A new generation of people who care for rhinos, wildlife and wilderness are now taking over the baton."
 Dr. Ian Player



environment & tourism
 Department: Environmental Affairs and Tourism
 REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



THE LATE DR IAN PLAYER.

The logical extension of this is to encourage communities to set aside a suitable area of land where they can start making money from rhinos by breeding and selling them, eventually harvesting the rhino horn on a regular basis with the expectation that there will be opportunities for a legal trade in the horn.

Although I am not a hunter myself, I am the first to appreciate the very important role that hunters have played in this country to set aside considerable areas of land for wildlife, in the process generating substantial funding for the conservation of biodiversity and providing thousands of jobs. Other countries need to appreciate that the private sector in South Africa is responsible for looking after about almost 40% of the country's rhinos – a total that exceeds the combined rhino population in the rest of Africa. We are committed to consumptive use; in other words, we should let our wildlife 'wash its own face'.

When the private sector was allowed to own rhino and sell them as live rhino, you saw people realising the value of keeping these animals.

Unfortunately, it has become extremely expensive to protect these animals now, and many of the private landowners are questioning whether or not to keep them as they have become a liability and not an asset.

“We are committed to consumptive use; in other words, we should let our wildlife ‘wash its own face’.”

It is about time the outside world gave South Africa credit for its outstanding track record in rhino conservation, as pioneered by the late Dr Ian Player, and the vitally important role played by the private landowners.

I do hope that South Africa will be bold enough to ask for legalisation of trade in rhino horn at CITES CoP 17, thus telling the outside world that we respect the value of rhinos, as do the majority of private landowners who have invested in

rhino conservation. It is really important to me that, although South Africa may seem to be a developed country relative to others on the continent, it nevertheless has many people living in poverty. A major priority for our government is to address this concern through job creation, improved education and health facilities, and a renewed commitment to tackling the damaging and escalating service-delivery protests. Against this background, the conservation of iconic species will not be a priority for the allocation of government funding. A legal trade in rhino horn (in which not a single animal would need to be killed) would enable the government to free up substantial funding for many other conservation priorities as rhinos would have a real value and pay for their own security.

The late Dr Ian Player, who made such an outstanding contribution to building up the numbers of southern white rhino, was a staunch advocate of the need for a legal trade in rhino horn as an essential component for the future security of the species, an opinion deserving recognition and support above all others.



DR MIKE KNIGHT

Mike Knight trained as a wildlife ecologist and has spent most of his career within South African National Parks. Involved in rhino conservation for the past 20 years, Mike has been chairman of the SADC Rhino Management Group (RMG) for the past six years and chairman of the IUCN SSC African Rhino Specialist Group since 2011.

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CALLING ALL *Rhino Owners*

How can you, the private rhino owner, help to solve the rhino crisis?

by Dr Mike Knight



WHITE RHINOCEROS OR SQUARE-LIPPED RHINOCEROS (*CERATOTHERIUM SIMUM*).

The solution is partly in your hands. At the beginning of 2013, South Africa provided a home to an estimated 21 000 (or 82%) of Africa's 25 500 black and white rhinos – the single largest rhino range state in the world. Namibia, Zimbabwe and Kenya collectively account for the next 16% (or 4 000 animals), making up the 'Big 4' rhino range states. More than 100 rhinos occur in Tanzania, Botswana and Swaziland with much smaller

numbers in Malawi, Uganda and Zambia.

South Africa's estimated white rhino population of 18 900 (beginning 2013) accounted for 93% of the total African population. The recovery of this species from its 20-50 animals left in Umfolozi in 1895 is hailed as one of the world's conservation success stories (see Figure 1). This recovery came about through stubborn protection in the early days.

However, a number of other

key inventions and developments facilitated this phenomenal growth in the white rhino population. These include:

1. The development of chemical capture in the 1960s allowed the safe capture and translocation of animals.
2. Removal of animals from what is now Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park to other conservation areas in South Africa and elsewhere (Zimbabwe, Namibia and Kenya), including to private-sector areas that importantly



spread the eggs among many more baskets. The most important strategic move was the introduction of white rhinos into Kruger National Park, which has grown to become the largest rhino population in the world. This population is now under threat from poaching, with recent estimates in 2014 putting the number at close to 9 000.

3. The introduction of trophy hunting of adult bull white rhinos started in 1968 when there were only 1 800 white rhinos. Selling rhinos at heavily subsidised prices in the early days helped encourage private owners take on surplus rhinos from parks. However, heavy hunting in the early days meant that there was initially very limited growth in white rhino numbers managed by the private sector. It was only after the first wildlife auctions in the late 1980s that rhinos began to realise their commercial market value, incentivising private owners to also bring the rhino population up through breeding. Rhino numbers and range then expanded considerably from this point.

4. The simultaneous development of more incentivising legislation (not by design!) around the ownership of wildlife saw the white rhino population grow to about 5 000 animals on approximately 400 individual properties in South Africa by 2008. This added a further two million hectares of land for rhino

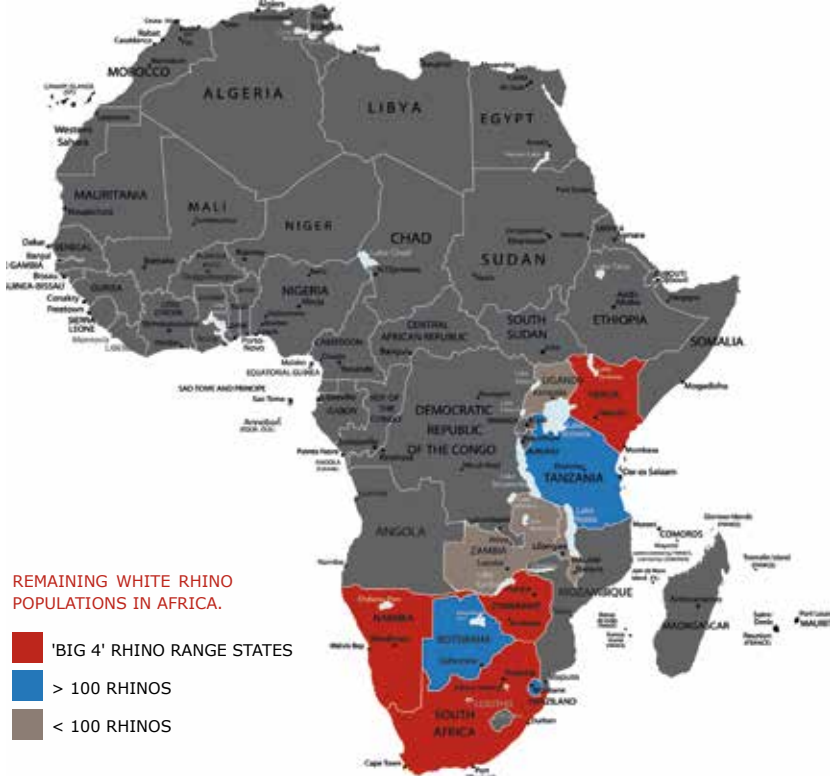
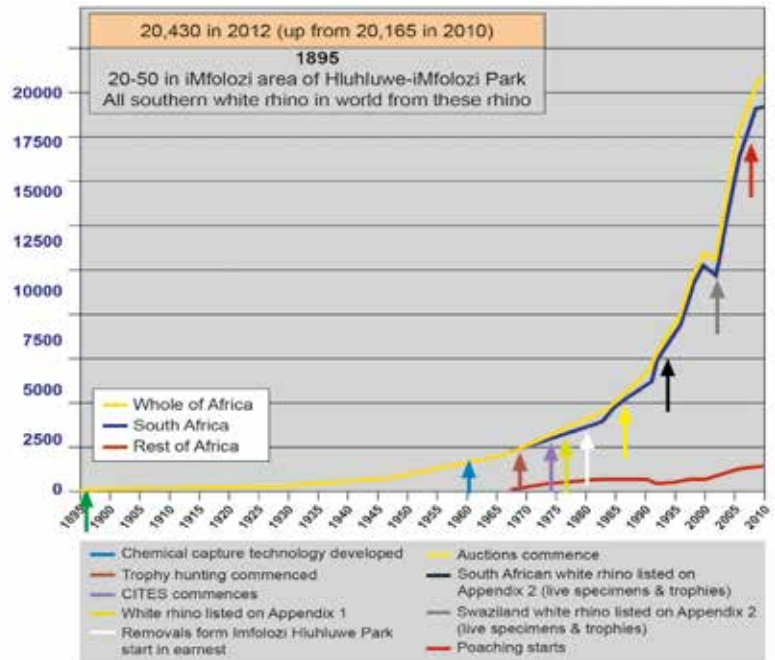


FIGURE 1: SOUTHERN WHITE RHINO NUMBERS IN SOUTH AFRICA AND THE REST OF AFRICA SINCE 1895 ALONG WITH IMPORTANT MILESTONES INDICATED BY ARROWS.



conservation. The South African private rhino owners conserve more rhinos than the rest of Africa protects. That said, the concern is that increasing protecting costs and risks to rhinos and people are driving numerous owners to

sell their rhinos, reducing financial resources for conservation and homes for rhinos.

The black rhino population trajectory at a continental level has largely been the opposite, crashing by 95% from 100 000 in 1960 to



BLACK RHINOCEROS OR HOOK-LIPPED RHINOCEROS (*DICEROS BICORNIS*).



REMAINING CRITICALLY ENDANGERED BLACK RHINO POPULATIONS IN AFRICA.

the lowest level of 2 410 animals in 1995. Relentless hunting, conflict with humans, habitat change, and the demand for horn by traditional Chinese medicine in South East Asia (notably China) and for horns in traditional jambiyas (daggers) in Yemen fuelled this rapid decline (Figure 2).

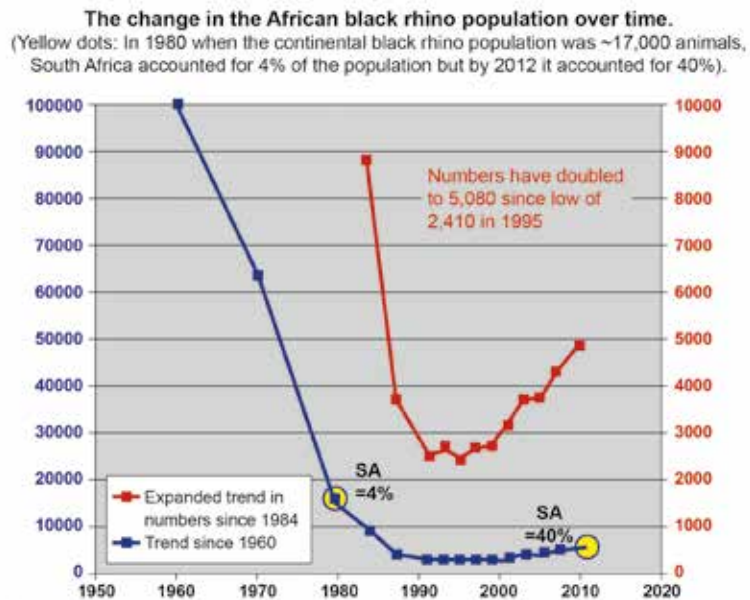
South Africa and Namibia largely escaped this heavy black rhino poaching, given that these countries were internationally isolated at the time and they had generally better resourced and capacitated wildlife conservation organisations. As a result, numbers of black rhino have continued to grow from a low base.

From 1995 onwards, through concerted protection efforts and a focus on improving biological management of the species, the continental population has more than doubled to reach 5 080 by early 2013. The same 'Big 4' black rhino states include South Africa (40% – it had only 4% of the continental population in 1980!), Namibia (35%), Kenya (13%) and Zimbabwe (8%).

That's the good news. The bad news is poaching is now undoing all our hard work.

Where South Africa largely escaped the ravages of poaching in the

FIGURE 2: THE CHANGE IN AFRICAN BLACK RHINO POPULATION OVER TIME. THE RED LINE SHOWS THE DOUBLING OF BLACK RHINO NUMBERS SINCE 1995.



1980s, we are now at the epicentre of it. Our success has in part led to our current failure. Poaching is being driven by a complex mixture of:

- Increasing illegal demand for rhino horn in newfound markets in Southeast Asia, mainly Vietnam.

- Co-operation and support by some unscrupulous South African wildlife ranchers, veterinarians, outfitters and professional hunters who have colluded with Asian nationals to make rhino horn illegally available. This continues to damage



The bad news is poaching is now undoing all our hard work.



the reputation of South Africa as a responsible and innovative wildlife country. A few are undermining the success of the wildlife industry as a whole and dare I say even bringing sustainable use – a cornerstone of the South African constitution – into question by those not supportive of it for ideological reasons.

- The close proximity of Mozambique, which is awash with many poor, unemployed, trained and armed ex-combatants after years of civil war, together with an inadequate law enforcement system (although improving) that is compromised by rampant corruption.

- Increasing numbers of wealthy individuals and increasing disposable income in some Southeast Asian countries has coincided with a large increase in the price of rhino horn, fuelling poaching.

- The involvement of well-organised transnational criminal (TOC) networks has made the business of illegally trading in rhino horn into a multimillion-dollar industry. The existence of good infrastructure and communication networks makes the job of TOC that much easier.

- Declined efficiency and corruption in the South African law enforcement and conservation establishment.

So how do we save the rhino populations that South Africa has so boldly grown?

The call by certain sectors in the private and conservation industry that



the legal trade in horn is the perfect tonic to cure this poaching ill is simplistic. It could certainly be an important option (on top of already existing commercial value generated through tourism and limited trophy hunting) for raising revenue and incentives to conserve rhino. Demand reduction attempts in end-user states may not be successful or could take some time. It could also perhaps help save some rhino from poaching by supplying some of the existing demand without rhinos having to be deliberately killed to supply that horn.

However, legalising trade in horn will not be a single solution to the problem. Before any submission is expected to be acceptable to CITES (for which South Africa would need a two thirds majority



DEHORNING RHINO HORN IS DOCUMENTED AND MICROCHIPPED, AND SAMPLES ARE TAKEN FOR DNA TO ENSURE STRICT CONTROL.



from the parties), South Africa would need show an improvement in some basic activities, many of which in fact led to South Africa's conservation success in the very first place. These include:

1. An improvement in the basic underlying governance of our conservation estate and law enforcement establishments. This requires us to get on top of poaching that is currently killing just over three animals a day. There have been improvements in Kruger of late. In addition, we need to clamp down on those higher-up syndicates that are trafficking and selling the horn – and that is happening too slowly.

South Africa has made considerable progress in providing deterrent penalties, closing pseudo-hunting loopholes and also establishing bilaterals with China, Vietnam and Mozambique to improve co-operation and sharing of information. This need translate into positive results.

2. We need good and reliable information on rhino populations and rhino horn stocks. Sadly, we do not currently have this for over half the private rhino owners. Nor do we have reliable information on private rhino horn stocks.

Moves towards a national permitting system to track rhino populations and rhino horn are encouraging but too slow. Distrust by land owners for many dysfunctional and/or corrupt government departments has plagued the provision of information in the recent past. The SADC Rhino Management Group (RMG), which has collected and collated this information thus far, relies heavily on trust in not making the raw data of properties and rhino numbers available.

The latest RMG survey (with support from the Private Rhino Owners Association (PROA)) of

white rhinos on private land is attempting to update this information as South Africa builds up to CITES CoP 17 in 2016. Your support with information is essential. The building of trusting relationships with some provincial authorities is beginning to pay dividends.

The registration and marking of rhino horn and collection of DNA is progressing for poached and translocated animals but needs to be expanded to horn stocks and populations.



3. There is a need for greater self-regulation of professionals and members in the wildlife industry to show the world that South Africa is serious about cleaning up its tarnished image. A few are hurting the many.

Wildlife Ranching South Africa (WRSA) is constantly watchful for individual game ranchers that might stray in their strict adherence to the law, and has strengthened its Code of Conduct, its Disciplinary code and Procedures, and is constantly updating its 'Notes of Best Practice'. Disciplinary action has unfortunately been resorted to in the case of a few individuals who have not behaved according to these codes.

4. To have any chance of persua-

ding CITES to support a legalisation of rhino horn trade, South Africa will need to provide a secure mechanism by which to trade the horn, limiting opportunities for criminals to create parallel illegal markets to launder illegal horn. In addition, we would need to reassure parties that rhino populations in non-trading states would not be under greater threat of poaching. If some private owners still continue to be unco-operative, this is just arming opponents of trade, who will simply

question South Africa's ability to control a trade if they do not even know how many animals they have and where they are.

With the private wildlife industry an important part of the South African conservation success, it is imperative that every effort is made to pull together to get the conservation ship sailing in the right direction and maintain and preferably enhance the incentives to stay the long haul under very trying circumstances.

Your help in relatively small but important areas, such as the provision of population information to the RMG (which will ensure its confidentiality), and rhino horn data to the provincial authorities, will be essential.



PELHAM JONES

Chairman of the Private Rhino Owners Association (PROA), Pelham Jones has over 30 years' conservation experience and is a private reserve and rhino owner. In September 2009, PROA was established under his guidance and today it is recognised as a national body to lobby for and co-ordinate assistance to private reserves faced with ever-increasing poaching pressure.

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THE COST OF THE CITES TRADE BAN ON AFRICAN RHINO CONSERVATION

by Pelham Jones

Despite the introduction of the CITES international trade ban in 1977, overall rhino populations have suffered severe decline. It is estimated some 100 000 rhino have been poached. Some 23 African range states no longer have rhino, and certain countries that still have rhino have populations of less than 100 animals and declining (refer to the statistics and maps supplied by Dr Mike Knight on page 10 and 11 of this supplement). All this despite attempts to reduce demand, improve law enforcement, and rhino protection projects costing hundreds of millions of US dollars across Africa.

South Africa was relatively free of poaching until 2008. Since then, we have lost in excess of 4 600 animals, of which over 1 100 were poached on private reserves. A conservative calculation of the financial loss of animals killed on private reserves is R400m. Add to this the annual cost of rhino security on private reserves alone at an estimated R300m a year and allowing for a low-cost factor in 2008 to where we are today, an additional security cost of R700m can be added to the



WHITE RHINOCEROS OR SQUARE-LIPPED RHINOCEROS (*CERATOTHERIUM SIMUM*).





value of animals lost. Thus private rhino reserves have lost over R1bn in direct loss plus the devaluation of the value of rhino due to risk and the lost progeny or breeding potential of animals poached. Regrettably, these private reserves receive *no* assistance from the state.

The reality is the trade ban has not worked by any reasonable measure and on the contrary has helped create a vast illegal market dominated by transnational crime syndicates that remain untouchable. Like the illegal drugs

trade, will demand go away? As long as there is money to be made, the syndicates will drive any illegal demand, whether it be rhino horn, pangolin scales or even human trafficking.

It is estimated that the US government spends about \$70bn on drug enforcement annually; despite this, drugs are freely available in all US cities. Not even the death penalty (as applied in certain countries) is a deterrent to the drug traders. The illegal killing of rhino is no different. Despite

the number of poachers shot and killed or arrested, and despite our best efforts at huge financial and personal costs to rhino owners, the syndicates remain relentless.

At the CITES convention held in Bangkok 2013, I came across a poster where the success of white rhino conservation in South Africa was credited to the CITES ban! What an inaccurate and misleading statement. The success of rhino conservation in South Africa was driven by sustainable utilisation and the ability of private reserves



to purchase excess animals from state and provincial reserves. We now find ourselves in a situation where population decline is a reality due to poaching.

In 2011, PROA addressed a letter to the Minister of Environmental Affairs requesting the lifting of the moratorium on domestic trade. During the Rhino Issue Management (RIM) public hearings, PROA again motivated a domestic trade module to be used as a template to the international community on how sustainable utilisation can be used through the sale of rhino horn to bring much-needed revenue back to rhino conservation.

It is a total misrepresentation that certain anti-trade NGOs state that the private owned reserves wish for trade to make money. Firstly, we are already over R1bn out of pocket (ignoring the original investment costs, land use and management costs), and secondly, the private reserves hold the smallest volume of stockpiles after provincial and national parks, all of whom are in desperate need of additional funding to cover ever-increasing security.

So we must ask the question: who will help cover these costs? In the current domestic and international economic environment, I do not see any billion-rand-a-year donor funding or government's willingness to cover these costs. The suggestion of a tourism levy is naive and little to no tax rebates can be expected from the South African Revenue Service (SARS).

If we are allowed to trade in rhino horn, rhino will become the most protected and valuable animal in Africa. The value of horn exceeds gold and cocaine. Our plea to the member states of CITES attending

SA Rhino poaching stats for 2014

RHINO POACHED

SA	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total
KNP (SANParks)	0	4	20	14	7	10	17	10	38	50	148	252	421	606	827	2424
MAR NP (SANParks)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	3	3	0	12
MAP NP (SANParks)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
GP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	15	9	1	8	5	45
LIM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	23	16	52	74	59	114	110	448
MP	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	2	6	17	31	28	92	15	264
NW	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	7	10	57	21	77	87	68	326
EC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	4	11	7	5	15	46
FS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	4	0	4	4	4	17
KZN	7	2	5	8	3	1	5	0	14	28	38	34	66	85	79	395
WC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	2	0	1	9
NC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	6
	7	6	25	22	10	13	24	13	83	122	333	448	668	1004	1215	3993

ARRESTS

Poaching level (2014)	KNP	MNP	MAP	GP	MP	EC	LP	NW	FS	KZN	WC	NC	SA Totals	Level Description
Level 1	174	0	0	12	45	2	60	14	0	67	0	0	374	Poacher
Level 2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	Receiver / Courier
Level 3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	Courier / Buyer
Level 4	0	0	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	Exporter
Level 5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Buyer / Driver
Total Arrests	174	0	1	21	45	2	60	14	0	68	1	0	386	

DATA SOURCE: National Wildlife Crime Reaction Unit

SA RHINO POACHING STATISTICS UP TO 2014. UNFORTUNATELY STAKEHOLDERS AND THE MEDIA ARE NO LONGER ABLE TO GUARANTEE ACCURATE REPORTED RHINO POACHING AND POACHER ARREST STATISTICS FOLLOWING THE SOUTH AFRICAN DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS' DECISION IN 2015 TO NO LONGER REPORT THIS INFORMATION REGULARLY.

CoP17 in South Africa from 24 September to 5 October 2016 is this: should South Africa table a trade proposal, carefully consider the motivation of our conservation experts, scientists, economists and individuals who are responsible for preserving and protecting 92% of Africa's rhino on a daily basis. It would be the greatest travesty of conservation for the needs of one nation to be negated by the counter-vote of a nation that has no rhino but has been influenced by radical NGOs or advisors who are not directly involved in rhino conservation and have little understanding of this complex problem.



The greatest tragedy is the conservation polarisation on the trade debate. It has never been stated that trade is the simple or only

solution; it must form part of a composite management plan that includes better law enforcement, international cooperation, community involvement and beneficiation, to name a few strategies. It goes without saying that we live in desperate times and we will be judged as much for what we did not do as for what we did do. This issue has been debated since 1992 in thousands of meetings, discussions and position papers, while rhino continue to be killed on a daily basis.

It is now time to stop talking and carry out bold actions to save one of the most iconic species in the world. If not, the negative impact on our image as a country – the loss of a species and no longer being home to the Big Five – is beyond comprehension.



JULIAN STURGEON

Julian Sturgeon is a rural development specialist, working primarily to support the sustainable use and exploitation of natural resources such as wildlife and its habitats by local communities. He has worked in southern Africa for over 30 years, specialising in project design and management, organisational and institutional learning, policy development, training, workshop facilitation, and evaluation. He is currently the executive director of Resource Africa.

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CONSERVATION & COMMUNITY BENEFITS

by Julian Sturgeon



WHITE RHINOCEROS OR SQUARE-LIPPED RHINOCEROS (*CERATOTHERIUM SIMUM*).



ZAMBIA



ZIMBABWE

Community benefits are today perceived as a necessary component of conservation, and the provision of benefits, in one form or another, is part of government policy in most, if not all, SADC countries.

It was not always so. In southern Africa in the 1980s, for example, community benefits from conservation was a relatively novel idea and was the focus of a number of intriguing programmes that sought to include communities in the complex command-and-control system

that constituted national conservation efforts in the region. The ADMADE (Administrative Design for Management) programme in Zambia and the CAMPFIRE (Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources) programme in Zimbabwe were leading examples of this new approach.

In the early days of CAMPFIRE, impala were culled in Kariba district in their thousands every year, for population control, and the local communities collected the

meat. This was a simple operation and satisfied the twin objectives of species population control and community benefit. Today, community-based conservation (CBC) is part of the conservation agenda, and the delivery of community benefits is routinely the subject of national policy debate. It is also a rather more complicated business now than it was 30 years ago, and has become an industry.

Community benefits are part and parcel of CBC, and cannot be seen simply as a handout to a



local community that happens to live next door to a State-protected area. The concept of conservation in Africa is itself being transformed. It was once understood to be the sole preserve of the State, the work of colonial administrations that presided over land ownership and management, and which required the establishment of protected areas to be managed by cadres of conservation officials and rangers.

Indigenous communities were at best 'part of the furniture', to be moved about as policy dictated, and at worst were forcibly relocated from ancestral lands, at great cost to their lives and their culture. Private land owners began to play a role in the 1960s, and in South and southern Africa they are major contributors to biodiversity conservation and to the flourishing wildlife economy in South Africa.

Communal land ownership is the defining feature of CBC, and common property management is the system that has evolved whereby natural resource management and benefit sharing is governed. The term 'community' is not particularly helpful in this context, as it is relatively generic, and without clear boundaries. Institutions are the building blocks of common property management, which is essentially a governance system, for which rules have been developed and tested.



SCENES FROM KRUGER PARK, 1920 - 1940.



ELINOR OSTROM



PROFESSOR MARSHALL MURPHREE



Private land owners began to play a role in the 1960s, and in South and southern Africa they are major contributors to biodiversity conservation and to the flourishing wildlife economy in South Africa.



Elinor Ostrom, Nobel Prize winner for economics in 2010, and Professor Marshall Murphree, of the University of Zimbabwe, and a principle architect of the CAMPFIRE programme, have constructed a set of rules or principles that may be applied to common property management, and which, to all intents and purposes, say the same things.

CBC is now firmly established as a pillar of modern conservation policy

and practice, and in consequence many people ask the question "Does it work?" The answer is, "Sometimes it does, and sometimes it doesn't." So the better question to ask is this: "Under what conditions is CBC likely to function well?" By which we mean, under what conditions does it deliver conservation goals as well as community benefits?

There is no single answer to this question. Conservation is no longer



KENYAN CONSERVATION OFFICIALS ADDRESS A COMMUNITY MEETING.



Kenya



...community-based conservation (CBC) is part of the conservation agenda, and the delivery of community benefits is routinely the subject of national policy debate.



the application of biological science – it comprises many cross-cutting elements and interdisciplinary themes. The science of ecology is not sufficient to describe its limits. Now that people are considered to be part of ecosystems, and not simply the external managers, we must now speak of political ecology and environmental economics. A whole new body of knowledge is emerging from the past 100 years of conservation practice, of which CBC is an essential component.

Strong and democratic institutions are essential elements of CBC and for the delivery of community benefits. And here again, we come across not so much a problem as an indeterminate entity. What are benefits and how are they to be measured? Is it the receiving of impala meat from a cull? Is it money? Is it the sense of control of land, and the resources it supports? Is it like the sense of pride that the farmer feels when he or she sees the newborn calf, or the newborn

rhino? The list is endless.

Where once the command-and-control system held sway, we now have co-management as a guiding principle. Not one boss, but several. And because history dictates that the state must have control, there is an unequal partnership, dominated by one faction. So the concept of adaptive management has emerged, which says that effective management is about evolving, about learning from one another, achieving balance rather than dominance. Jack Ruitenbeek and Cynthia Cartier (2001) even define it as ‘an emergent strategy in complex bio-economic systems’, referring to it as ‘the magic wand’.

This is where the community benefits discussion now stands. The recent World Parks Congress in Sydney in November 2014 identified the youth of member countries as a vital building block for biodiversity conservation, implicitly recognising that ‘community’ and ‘conservation’ are inseparable.



DIPATI BENJAMIN MAENETJA

Dipati Benjamin Maenetja is secretariat of the Balepye community and a member of the Balepye royal family. A social and community activist, he graduated with a BSc in physics and chemistry and is a specialist tax practitioner. Passionate about wildlife ranching and conservation, he is a pioneer of rhino ranching and wildlife for sustainable use and community empowerment.

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LIMPOPO COMMUNITIES TO LOBBY CITES TO LEGALISE THE RHINO-HORN TRADE

by Dipati Benjamin Maenetja



The sustainable use of rhino is a key issue in terms of promoting the socio-economic upliftment of the Balepye and Selwane communities in Limpopo.

These communities have reclaimed the land originally taken from them (historically an area used for game-farming), which lies between Tzaneen and the Kruger National Park, adjacent to the Hans Merensky Nature Reserve. Various farm portions were redeveloped and consolidated to form a single 9 000ha area for tourism and conservation development. In partnership with private landowners, a 20 000ha private reserve has been created – one of the largest in the country – known as the Greater Balepye Nature Reserve. Having identified wildlife as the sector best able to support the aspirations of our communities, we asked government and the private sector to partner with us and focus on the sustainable use of communal land. In 2013,

government drew up a plan whereby we could consider ranching rhino as a viable economic activity.

In our villages, about 70% of people are unemployed, so job creation is uppermost in our minds. Strategic partnerships with government and private investors, including WRSA members (the community is also a member of WRSA), will allow us to protect the national treasure that is the rhino while benefiting the broader community by selling a renewable resource, the horn, and protecting the animal in the process. Currently, the only people benefiting from poaching (syndicates aside) are the poachers themselves – and this asset-stripping is robbing us of something that is rightfully ours.

We chose WRSA as a partner because it was the only body with the reputation, skills and will to assist us with our initiative. WRSA rhino owners have mentored us and given us advice; farmers owning rhinos should indeed consider partnering

with communities in their areas and exploring a similar business model, which will ultimately lead to greater rhino protection.

Communities that are invested in the survival of the species will be less likely to offer support to poachers in exchange for money. In fact, if similar projects are allowed to flourish in the country, we will be able to push back against rhino poaching and actually take the fight to the poacher.

The wealth generated by the sale of the legal horn will go back to the communities for capacity building and revenues in the form of taxes will be paid to government. We would like to lobby CITES to legalise the rhino-horn trade as it will allow us to tackle the socio-economic ills that still plague our communities.

This is but one of the issues underscoring our rhino conservation and sustainable game-ranching project, which will see the communities focusing on hunting, breeding, tourism and conservation.



DR BRIAN CHILD

Brian Child, an associate professor at the University of Florida, works on the economics and governance of wildlife in southern Africa, with particular expertise in community governance and park management systems.

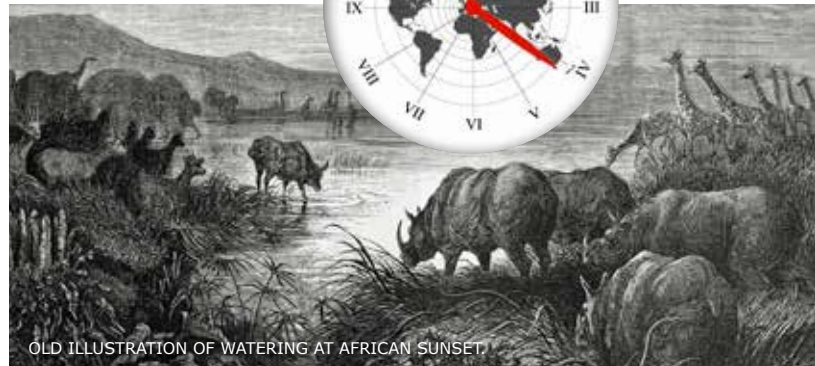
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WILDLIFE POLICY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA: *Why not crop the game?*

by Dr Brian Child



A WHITE RHINOCEROS (*CERATOTHERIUM SIMUM*) WITH HER BABY.



OLD ILLUSTRATION OF WATERING AT AFRICAN SUNSET.

The key to the recovery of wildlife in southern Africa is not technical or ecological, but carefully crafted legal changes that address ‘market failure’ by returning the ownership and value of wildlife to landholders. In this article, I would like to give credit to some of the far-sighted conservationists who challenged conservation dogma to lead southern Africa down a bold new policy pathway.

Africa is the only place on earth with five, and as many as 15, large mammals in any one place. However, there is a significant danger that these will be lost in the near future, as Africa’s human population doubles to two billion people, unless radical changes are made.

Since the 1970s, West Africa has

lost 80% of the wildlife in its national parks, and even more outside. East Africa has lost half the wildlife in its parks, and some 70% outside them. By contrast, southern African parks have maintained or even slightly increased their wildlife, and after wildlife was nearly annihilated on private land by the 1960s, it has rebounded at least fivefold.

While many factors may be at play, the clear fact is that species of plants and animals that are owned (like cattle and crops) replace species that are not owned (like wildlife). It is only in southern Africa that a deliberate attempt has been made to return the ownership of wildlife to landholders and communities, and it is only in southern Africa that wildlife is thriving. By ownership we mean the rights to sell, use, benefit from, and protect wildlife.

As white people discovered and settled in North America and Africa, on the frontier of the Industrial Revolution, they decimated the wildlife. Better technology (guns) and markets (trains, steamships), in the absence of government controls on offtake, enabled them to harvest vast numbers of bison, elephant, egret feathers and other wildlife on the frontier of white settlement.

Shocked by the devastation of uncontrolled market hunting, President Teddy Roosevelt and his colleagues in America banned the commercial use of wildlife, shifted the control of forests and wildlife to newly emerging state wildlife agencies, and established national parks.

The European colonial powers, meeting at the London Conventions of 1900 and 1933, did very much the same – they effectively nationalised



RHINOCEROS AND HUNTER IN THE SAVANNAH, OLD ILLUSTRATION.

OLD ILLUSTRATION OF EXPLORER JOHN SPEKE SHOWING HUNTING TROPHIES TO RUMANIKA.



wildlife; a legacy (and curse) that we live with today.

What these early policy-makers ignored was that an equal or greater threat to wildlife was replacement by the cow and the plough, driven by human population growth that began in earnest across Africa following World War II. In the 1950s, scientists began to make the case that wildlife was hardier, more disease resistant and better suited to harsh African conditions, such as drought, than livestock. Much of this pioneering conservation work was conducted in East Africa, with people like George Adamson and Ian Parker advocating what we would today call community conservation.

The winds of change began to sweep through Africa, and leading conservationists from across the continent met in Arusha to chart a new course for African wildlife. The mood of the 'Convention of Nature and Natural Resources in Modern African States' was captured by a South African, Rudi Bigalke: "The indigenous mammals had evolved in the country and were well-adapted to local conditions. Every available food niche was occupied... Domestic animals were ruining the country. *Why not crop the game?*"

This was a reaction to the rapid loss of wildlife on production landscapes. In Zimbabwe, ranchers claimed that they "couldn't farm in a zoo". Elephant and buffalo were deliberately

eradicated by government hunters, while ranchers shot hundreds of wildebeest and zebra to protect grazing for livestock, and the highest value for wildlife was for staff rations or dog meat because selling the meat was illegal.

This waste appalled Reay Smithers of *Mammals of Southern Africa* fame. Using the new and far-sighted Zimbabwe Wildlife Act of 1960 that allowed game cropping through government permits, he invited three Fulbright Scholars from the University of Berkeley to experiment with wildlife utilisation and game cropping. Ray Dasmann, Archie Mossman and Thane Riney therefore began experimenting with game cropping on Doddieburn and Manyoli ranches in southern Zimbabwe, with Riney going on to lead the FAO/UNDP special project that aimed to establish wildlife as an industry in Africa in the mid-1960s.

Motivated by the rapid disappearance of wildlife, the heads of wildlife agencies from across southern Africa began to meet for a week each year as the 'Standing Committee for Nature Conservation, Wildlife Utilization and Management' (MUNC) under the umbrella of Southern African Regional Commission for the Conservation and Utilization of Soil (SARCCUS).

Today, we owe a great deal to these far-sighted wildlife professionals who were confident

enough to entrust landholders with the economic control of wildlife on their land. In 1967, Bernabie de la Butte radically altered Namibia's wildlife ordinances to introduce commercial use and partial ownership of wildlife. Similar changes happened in Mozambique (led by Ken Tinley), Botswana (Alex Campbell, Graham Child) and less explicitly through South Africa's provincial arrangements.

The most progressive leap was perhaps in Zimbabwe, where Archie Fraser (assisted by Graham Child) crafted the progressive Parks and Wildlife Act of 1975. This Act boldly entrusted landholders with almost full ownership of wildlife by declaring them the 'appropriate authority' for wildlife on their land. In seeking to 'maximise the value of wildlife to landholders', commercial uses of wildlife were deliberately encouraged (as long as they were humane) by the Parks agency. The agency also replaced bureaucratic pricing with auctions and tenders to drive up the price of wildlife, and also eliminated as many government fees and bureaucratic regulations as possible to make wildlife as competitive as possible.

Understanding the power of peer pressure, carefully crafted legislation devolved to communities of landholders the powers to regulate each other through a democratic process. An important outcome was

that control over mobile wildlife (as well as soil erosion, deforestation, and so on) was exerted through collective action. This is why, unlike in Namibia and South Africa, the expansion of game ranching in Zimbabwe was not accompanied by game fencing.

By this time, research showed that game produced as much meat as livestock, but was less viable because of underdeveloped venison markets, veterinary restrictions and other factors. Simultaneously, the centre of gravity of the trophy hunting industry began to shift south, away from East and West Africa, as newly independent states adopted a socialist model of governance and centralised rather than decentralised the control of wildlife.

In the famous hunting safari countries like Kenya, Tanzania, Sudan and elsewhere, big-game hunting was banned or diminished, and leading professional hunters like Rundgren, John Lawrence (of Hunters Africa Ltd., the first hunting company in Kenya that started as White Hunters Ltd.), Harry Selby and others relocated to Botswana, giving rise to southern Africa's budding hunting industry.

Pioneering game ranchers like the Hendersons, the Styles family on Buffalo Range in southern Zimbabwe and Peter Johnstone of Rosslyn Safaris near Victoria Falls began to experiment with mini-safaris, and soon discovered that wildlife's comparative advantage lay in high-value hunting, rather than meat production. My PhD research on these game and cattle ranchers in the early 1980s showed that the profit per kilogram of biomass from wildlife was two or more times that of livestock. Although faced with strong opposition from the agricultural sector, ranchers responded rapidly to these economic signals, and within two decades the



majority of ranchers in semi-arid areas adopted wildlife as a major, or sole, land use. The same rapid shift occurred in South Africa, especially when agricultural subsidies were phased out in 1994, as well as in Namibia, and to a lesser extent in Botswana, where the amount of private land is relatively small.

It was the unique characteristics of trophy hunting that allowed this transition. With an offtake rate of about 2% of large males, compared to natural growth rates of 10-20%, landholders could make good money while allowing the depleted wildlife that remained on cattle ranches to recover rapidly. In Zimbabwe, early hunting relied mainly on browsers like kudu and eland, and hardy animals like impala and warthog, which had survived the pressures of livestock grazing. When ranchers began destocking cattle, grazing species like zebra, sable, tsessebe and so on began to recover, sometimes helped by reintroductions. This is why the current trend to demonise trophy hunting is so dangerous: it is

the only way to maintain a positive cash flow while recovering depleted wildlife populations, and we owe as much as three-quarters of the wildlife habitat on private land to hunting revenues. Pristine wild areas or African bush, park buffer zones, and wildlife on private and communal land are best preserved, somewhat ironically, through the blessing of controlled and carefully monitored, high-expense hunting.

By the mid-1980s, it was clear that wildlife was a legitimate and competitive land-use option in drylands. However, a superior wildlife resource that included big game in many communal lands was rapidly disappearing. Alarmed by the loss of wildlife in communal lands, ecologists in Zimbabwe's Parks department insisted that the same principles could apply to African communities; indeed, Graham Child set a precedent before independence in the mid-1970s when, as the director of the National Parks, he encouraged the Ministry to bring wildlife management in 'tribal trust lands' more in line with policies in



ROWAN MARTIN



European areas and persuaded parliament that money derived from wildlife in communal lands should be returned to these people. Money from culling in Chirisa Safari Area was returned to communities, and money from a small elephant quota was used to build a school in the Makenye community near Gonarezhou in 1982.

These ideas were theorised in the path-breaking *Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources* document written by Rowan Martin in 1984, noting that simply giving rural people benefits would fail; they needed to be given genuine ownership of wildlife, just like white farmers, with communities establishing 'village companies' to manage these rights.

Although Zimbabwe's wildlife agency was thwarted from creating a village wildlife title, it was nevertheless able to go quite far in this direction, leading to the groundbreaking Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources, or CAMPFIRE programme. Starting in 1989, most communities set up democratic structures to manage wildlife and its revenues, and in several communities, like Masoka, Mahenye and Chikwarakwara, people got annual wildlife dividends. In 2003, several years after significant donor support ended, CAMPFIRE was still vigorous and innovative, but then lost its impetus with the dramatic and destructive decline of the

Zimbabwean economy.

Working closely with the Zimbabweans, Namibia developed its own community wildlife programme, but leaders like Chris Brown, Brian Jones and Malan Lindeque from the Ministry fought hard to ensure that 100% of wildlife revenues were returned to the communities that generated them. There was little wildlife left in communal areas in Namibia in the 1980s, but empowered and benefiting communities, supported by high-quality NGOs, ensured that wildlife expanded rapidly, not least populations of desert elephant and rhino and, remarkably, big predators.

Namibia shows clear evidence that a substantial 25-year investment in communities has paid off, not only in terms of wildlife recovery, but also with increased community income and the positive impact of hunting and tourism on the national economy; where there had been only a handful of tourism lodges and hunting concessions in Namibia in the early 1990s, there are now more than 50 of each of these, generating tens of millions of dollars of business.

It is no accident that southern Africa is the only place in the developing world where wildlife is recovering as a major economic sector. This is the legacy of courageous and resourceful wildlife policy-makers who recognised that wildlife was safest in the hands of the people who lived with it, and encouraged them to develop global

markets and new wildlife products to make wildlife an increasingly competitive land use.

It was this combination of strong *proprietorship* and maximised *prices* that led to the recovery of wildlife. By contrast, in countries where the freedom of 'hands-off' wildlife management has not devolved upon landholders, and where sustainable use and markets have been restricted, these government controls have stifled the wildlife sector.

The lessons for rhino conservation are obvious: unless we put control of rhinos back in the hands of landholders, and encourage high-priced global markets, rhinos are unlikely to survive the massive pressures piled up against them. Indeed, rhinos are the ultimate sustainable product, with non-lethal harvesting of horns being far more valuable even than trophy hunting.

In the 1960s, we were blessed with conservation paradigm-shifters and rule-changers with the vision and tenacity to swim against the tide of conservation orthodoxy. They brought wildlife back from the brink of extinction on private land by giving ownership of wildlife back to landholders and communities, and recognising in global markets the power to drive a massive expansion of wildlife. We have reached a similar point again in the conservation of rhinos. But will our current conservation leaders be as bold, brave and far-sighted as their predecessors?



TED REILLY

The father and icon of conservation in Swaziland, Ted Reilly has worked to conserve existing animals and reintroduce those which had gone locally extinct – thanks to his efforts, 22 species of mammals have been reintroduced to Swaziland, from the blue duiker to the elephant. He was made Counsellor of the Royal Order by King Mswati III in 1989.

For more information, visit: <http://www.biggameparks.org>



MSWATI III (BORN 1968) ON 10 EMALANGENI, 2006 BANKNOTE FROM SWAZILAND. KING OF SWAZILAND.

THE SWAZI CONSERVATION REALITY

by Ted Reilly



WHITE RHINOCEROS OR SQUARE-LIPPED RHINOCEROS (*CERATOTHERIUM SIMUM*). SWAZILAND.

Major Ian Grimwood, a noted conservationist and a recipient of the much-coveted Paul Getty Conservation Prize, once said: "It is not governments or committees we have to thank for saving Africa's wildlife for the world, but a handful of individuals." This is certainly the case with Swaziland's designated protected areas, which total 75 000ha, with an additional 80 000ha converted to game farms and conservancies by the private sector, developments that

have been led and encouraged by Big Game Parks (BGP) and strongly supported initially by King Sobhuza II, and more recently by King Mswati III.

Today, the country's wildlife tourist industry is marketed as one of the best Big Five viewing destinations, including superb opportunities to see rhino at close quarters in their natural habitat, in the process providing sustainable jobs across a wide section of the country's economy.

The role of the country's game rangers in these successes also

KINGSLEY HOLGATE VISITING BIG GAME PARKS' HLANE ROYAL NATIONAL PARK.



"IF YOU'RE CONCERNED ABOUT THE CALAMITOUS STATE OF RHINOS – AND WILDLIFE – IN AFRICA, THEN CONSIDER WHAT TED REILLY HAS TO SAY." – SCOTT RAMSAY.

needs wider recognition. What has worked for BGP is the realisation that an academic qualification often has little relevance to scenes of crime, and that many rangers today are overqualified in this respect.

The attributes required for a successful and functional game ranger are an ability to endure long and irregular hours of discomfort, extreme heat, bitter cold, hunger, thirst and fatigue, for these are the realities of the poaching coalface.

Academics are more inclined towards more comfort, shorter hours for more pay, tea breaks, lunch and unionisation; these have no place at hostile crime scenes. In fact, a good ranger is often an ex-poacher

whose bush skills can match those of bush-wise criminals. Furthermore, bush-wise intelligence, which such rangers have in abundance as opposed to some of their academic counterparts, is pivotal.

However, there is no ground for complacency, as in common with all other African countries Swaziland's protected areas and the species they contain are also facing an unprecedented level of threat from rapidly growing and encroaching human populations, with the illegal trade in rhino horn bringing rhino populations closer to extinction in most of the continent's protected areas. I believe that this priority

concern should be addressed by trying something new and radical, *giving more thought to the welfare of rhinos rather than focusing on more fundraising.*

The majority of African rhino custodians whom I have contacted favour a trial period of a legal trade in rhino horn, because they all appreciate and understand that the present trade ban is not helping keep rhinos alive. They have convinced me that until legalising the trade in horn as an option is tried, we will never know whether or not it will work.

These same custodians also argue that persisting with what is not working and has not worked for 38 years is not sensible, and that suggesting the precautionary approach – demand reduction and education – as a new alternative, is flawed and confusing because these are all integral to the ban anyway, and the ban has been in place since 1977. Introducing them now as something new simply serves to cloud and confuse the issues.

If this option is tried as a solution, it would be wise to do so now while there are still a sufficient number of live rhinos to provide a cushion





KINGSLEY HOLGATE, A SOUTH AFRICAN EXPLORER, HUMANITARIAN AND AUTHOR VISITED BIG GAME PARKS' HLANE ROYAL NATIONAL PARK TO DISCUSS SWAZILAND'S ANTI-POACHING METHODS WITH THE PIONEER OF CONSERVATION IN SWAZILAND, TED REILLY.

against possible failure. If CITES delays removing the trade ban until we reach the threshold of no return, it will be too late and rhinos will become history.

This option implies full commercialisation and includes harvesting the horn. It has to be agreed that a farmed rhino without a horn is not the rhino we all want to see. But it is at least a live rhino, and a live rhino is also a breeding rhino, and surely a live rhino has got to be better than a dead rhino or no rhino at all? Furthermore, as has so often been said, legalising the trade would enable sustainably harvesting the horn without killing the rhino, because the horn keeps growing. The anti-trade lobby, which includes many NGOs, is vehemently opposed to legalising the trade, dividing and polarising the conservation community into opposing camps.

The same lobby also believes that opening the trade will negatively impact on Kenya's rhinos and expose them to extinction. The truth is that if Kenya or any other country cannot look after its own rhinos,

it will lose them anyway, whether or not there is legal trade – and there is nothing any southern African State, or even the United Nations, can do to stop Kenya's poaching if the country does not itself have the political resolve and exercise the practical ability to do so by protecting its own rhinos. This is easily shown by comparing Kenya with South Africa over the past 40 years. Since Kenya banned the consumptive use of wildlife, it has lost 80% of its wild animals; since South Africa legalised ownership and consumptive commercialisation of game, it has more than trebled its wildlife estate over the same period of time!

In South Africa, the late Dr Ian Player was another graphic example of Grimwood's 'handful of individuals'. Shortly before he died, he told me that the celebrities of the world are being misinformed by the anti-trade lobby, and that while rhino custodians are preoccupied defending themselves and their rhinos at the poaching coalface, they are being totally outsmarted by



the marketing skills of the anti-trade lobby. He had no doubt that the world is highly influenced by global iconic characters, including members of the British royal family, Hollywood stars and popular sports icons.

Dr Ian Player, who more than anyone else was responsible for making the southern white rhino safe by its wider distribution, was a sincere advocate of its consumptive utilisation as a strategy for its survival, and a strong supporter of a legal trade in rhino horn.

BGP also subscribes to the IUCN philosophy of sustainable utilisation of natural resources – both consumptive and non-consumptive – and is governed by the economic imperative. In the absence of government subsidies, if we do not generate the



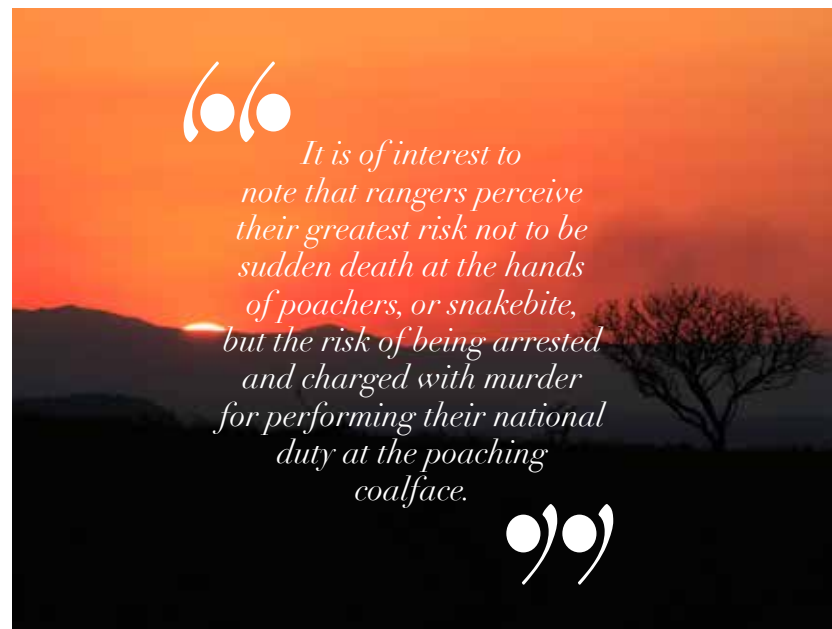
funds we need from admission fees, accommodation revenues and trading receipts, we cannot pay our staff each month. Over the years, BGP has necessarily evolved to practice what we call *pragmatic conservation*. However, BGP has *not* hunted a single rhino since successfully applying for CITES Appendix II status, as economic viability has been achieved without having to resort to sport or trophy hunting – these being the two most lucrative components of nature conservation. I hope we never will because I have no stomach for killing animals for sport, but when you have a labour force and a ranger force and administration staff to pay at month-end, you have to have money with which to do it. The alternative is bankruptcy or the loss of habitat to alternative land use, which might come with a reduction in job opportunity.

To save Africa's rhinos requires custodians who are dedicated beyond themselves to the welfare of rhinos and other wildlife, and in southern Africa there is no shortage of such individual custodians. Most importantly, it needs a supportive police force and the support of

the head of state, without which conservation efforts would be futile. It needs a committed game ranger force with legal protection to enable rangers to perform their duty without fear or favour. It is of interest to note that rangers perceive their greatest risk not to be sudden death at the hands of poachers, or snakebite, but the risk of being arrested and charged with murder for performing their national duty at the poaching coalface. This is a huge indictment on society, with its preoccupation with the human rights of criminals

taking precedence over the human rights of victims.

I believe in miracles. In Swaziland, we had no wildlife to speak of 50 years ago, but the Kingdom now has an extremely rich wildlife offering, and a portfolio of diverse parks to support it. Now another miracle is needed, this time for the rhinos of Africa, by persuading two thirds of the CITES membership that the ban on horn trade is not working and that it be lifted before it is too late to reverse the current trend toward extinction.





JC STRAUSS

Born and raised on a game farm in the Limpopo Waterberg, JC was a platoon leader for six years during the Bush War. JC was part of the Kruger Park Unit formed to counter insurgents and ivory poachers from Mozambique and Zimbabwe in the Kruger National Park. He formed Eco Ranger in 2000 to train wildlife rangers and dangerous game guides.

For more information, contact JC Strauss: africa@ecoranger.co.za or visit www.ecoranger.co.za

AFRICA'S PARK RANGER QUALIFICATION

by JC Strauss



The challenges facing Africa's rangers are greater than ever before in the face of a continental poaching epidemic that threatens the very existence of our continent's remarkable wildlife.

Maintaining the motivation and morale of those at the front line of African conservation defence is of paramount importance if we hope to win what can only be described as a war against our wildlife and biodiversity.

The multi-billion-dollar illegal trade in protected species is one of the most lucrative illicit markets in the world today. Combined with

habitat loss, it is driving many wild animals and plants towards extinction. Unsustainable poaching and wildlife trafficking is perpetrated globally, with less developed countries often targeted in this theft.

Despite national and international laws designed to protect endangered species, almost all wild species are traded. Elephant ivory, rhino horn, big cats parts, pangolins, reptiles, birds and illegal timber are traded illegally in large quantities. This illegal trade is driven by demand for rare plants; bones, scales and other ingredients for traditional medicines; pets and zoo exhibits; collectors' trophies; decorations

and luxury items; as well as wild meat and other products.

With species being removed from the wild faster than they can repopulate, their inputs to critical natural processes and ecosystem resilience are lost – a knock-on effect that causes other species to disappear. Left unchecked, wildlife trafficking threatens to unravel entire ecosystems.

North of the Limpopo river (with the exception of Kenya), basically all rhino were killed illegally; the majority of the remaining rhino in the world is concentrated in South Africa, where there is a huge increase in rhino poaching and

Departures			
Time	Flight	Destination	Gate
12:00	OD 1961	BEIJING	06
12:15	PN 0034	TOKYO	18
12:20	T3 0529	DUBAI	32
12:30	PN 2415	HONG KONG	14
12:50	GI 1872	SINGAPORE	09
12:55	T3 0944	BANGKOK	27
13:20	SF 2778	SHANGHAI	20
13:45	OD 0061	SEOUL	31
13:50	BK 1532	KUALA LUMPUR	04
14:05	OD 3487	TAIPEI	12
14:30	PN 0194	OSAKA	03
14:35	SF 0028	JAKARTA	08



ARRESTS OF RHINO HORN SMUGGLERS POINT TO RESURGENT CHINESE AND VIETNAMESE INTEREST IN A CRUEL ILLEGAL BUSINESS THAT HAS PROVED HIGHLY LUCRATIVE FOR SOUTH-EAST ASIAN CRIMINALS.

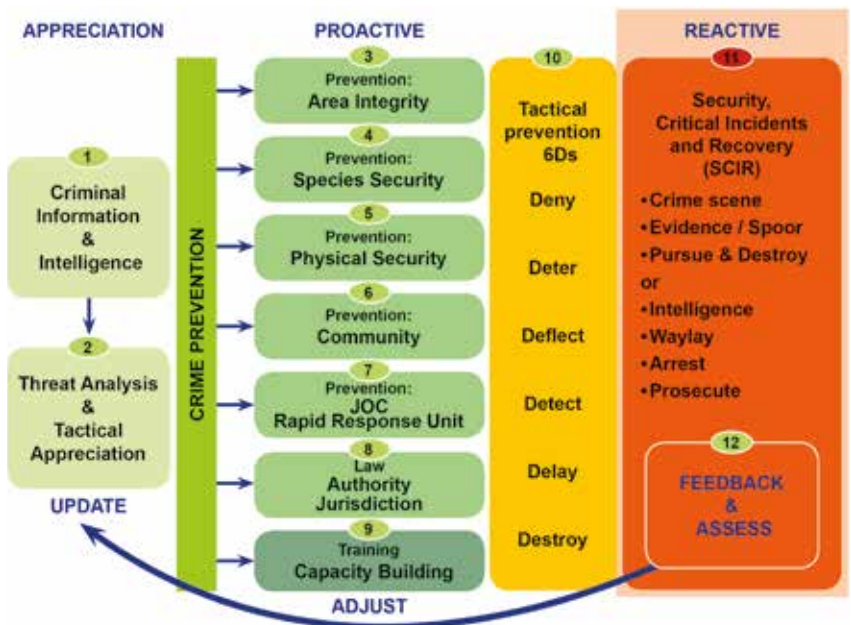


Maintaining the motivation and morale of those at the front line of African conservation defence is of paramount importance if we hope to win what can only be described as a war against our wildlife and biodiversity.



South Africa has lost more than 3 600 rhinos to poaching since 2008. By early 2013 Kenya had a mere 13% of the estimated black and white rhino population of the total of Africa's 25 500 rhinos.

At the African Wilderness Foundation (AWF) Emergency Rhino Summit in Kenya (April 2012) and the National Rhino Conservation Dialogue held in South Africa by the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) in May 2012, it was decided that the primary tier to ensure the survival of the specie is 'boots on the ground' – an increase in the deployment of well-trained and equipped rangers.





Currently, there is no new generation of anti-poaching rangers to meet the *huge* demand in national parks, provincial parks and the private reserves and farms.

The 'park ranger' initiative uses proven models, with new processes and approaches, to train a new generation of anti-poaching rangers with theory, skills and practical abilities to address this challenge and save our wildlife heritage for future generations.

The initiative

- 2012 October: Eco Ranger applied to the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) and the Quality Council for Trades and Occupation (QCTO) to develop an anti-poaching ranger qualification.
- 2013 February: Pre-scoping meeting was held by QCTO at the Eco Ranger HQ in Hoedspruit, Limpopo.
- 2013 July: Second pre-scoping meeting was held at PFTC HQ in Gauteng.

- 2013 October: Scoping Meeting was held at CATHSSETA HQ in Sandton, Gauteng.
- 2013 November: Community of Expert Practitioners (CEP) was selected by the QCTO.
- 2014 May: Development of the new national qualification commences.
- 2015 March: Posted for public comment (only one comment was received: 'excellent work').
- 2015 April: Submit to the QCTO for implementation.

Although all stakeholders in South Africa were invited to the scoping meeting, the splinter groups and *Boy Scout APUs* tried to derail the process for their own benefit.

Successful inputs and participation came from SANParks Kruger National Park, Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife, Free State Environmental Affairs, Game Rangers' Association of Africa (GRAA), Professional Firearm Training Council (PFTC), Wildlife Ranching South Africa (WRSA), Private Rhino Owners Association (PROA), Southern Africa

Wildlife College (SAWC), Ntomeni Ranger Services, Game Reserves United (GRU), Secret Eye, Reserve Protection Agency, International Anti-Poaching Foundation (IAPF), Eco Ranger Conservation Services and CATHSSETA.

Furthermore, all inputs from the rhino anti-poaching workshop 'Breaking the Chain', held at Hoedspruit on 25 and 26 September 2014, hosted by Quemic, were applied where relevant. The challenges of the current situation, combined with proven combat and tracking experience from bush wars, have been absorbed into the new qualifications.

What has changed?

- The previous qualification, 'Conservation Guardianship', had only 8 credits on a NQF Level 2
- New qualification park ranger:
 - o Field ranger – NQF Level 4 with 143 credits.
 - o Tracker – NQF Level 4 with 80 credits.



“Rangers are the principal guardians of the world’s premier natural biodiversity.”



- o Anti-poaching ranger – NQF Level 5 with 166 credits.
 - o Ranger (area integrity) – NQF Level 6 with 140 credits.
 - Minimum criteria for trainers: 10 years’ operational experience.
 - External assessment partner.
 - No more *fly-by-nights*, *Rambos* and *Boy Scout* games – only one ‘*anti-poaching ranger*’ national qualification that will create “a conservationist that fights like a soldier and a soldier that thinks like a conservationist”.
- The focus of the operation is to support and assist the reserve managers / section ranger / joint operational centres (JOC) / game ranchers in protecting the integrity of the area in line with current legislation, management plans, rules and guidelines through compliance with tactical, legal, safety and organisational requirements related to specialised operations in the fight against biodiversity crime. The curriculum focuses on:
- Gather intelligence and handle informers.
 - Develop a detailed knowledge of a criminal element and their tactics.
 - Develop an informer network and handle informers.
 - Explore all information sources.
 - Cooperation with other law enforcement agencies.
 - Advanced combat training and tactic.
 - Execute tactical combat techniques in an operational environment.
 - Neutralise a target at close quarters during operations.
 - Advanced combat tracking.
 - Give an accurate spoor report up to 30 minutes.
 - Execute reconnaissance tracking.
 - Execute follow-up and chopper-borne operations.
 - Safely dispatch with fast-roping from helicopter.
 - Use tactical operations to combat wildlife crime.
 - Perform observation and reconnaissance operations.
 - Apply advance combat tactics.
 - Execute way-lay operations.
 - Execute search and seizure.
 - Execute the correct arrest procedure.
 - Secure and manage crime scene.
 - Secure and protect evidence at the crime scene.
 - Chain of custody of evidence.
 - Provide a statement (elements of a crime).
 - Understand court procedure.

Conclusion

The South African park ranger qualification is the first of its kind in the world and will be the most elite ranger qualification worldwide. It is on par with, but also more comprehensive than, similar courses found in regional military units and will specialise in training rangers as field rangers with a broad education in conservation monitoring and reporting and specialised combat tracking.

They will qualify as elite anti-poaching rangers and area integrity rangers that can proactively lead other rangers in the African bush.

Rangers are the principal guardians of the world’s premier natural biodiversity.

This is a hard-hitting piece, bold, direct and definitely real...the voice of a ranger. It may not appeal to those who prefer to be passive about rhino poaching – but the fact is, that our rangers are fathers, sons, uncles and friends and they literally put their lives on the line every day.

In our endeavours to stop rhino poaching, have we become completely de-sensitised to loss of human life, too? Are we going to accept that losing our sons and fathers is the price we will have to pay?

Be brave enough to face these facts, be honest enough to admit being passive, or skip this article. There is no easy way to convey this reality – only to be direct...



A CONFISCATED .303 RIFLE THAT WAS USED TO KILL SEVERAL RHINO AND POTENTIALLY RANGERS AND/OR RANCHERS.

As a first line of defence and the guardians of our natural heritage, rangers do their utmost to protect the rhino and to counter biodiversity crime by:

- Risking their lives.
- Working through nights and bad weather.
- Neglecting their families and friends.
- Risking being on the wrong side of the law and arrested for murder if a poacher gets killed.
- Accepting a low remuneration for the risk involved (only one quarter of a soldier's pay).

Be honest with yourself and answer these questions:

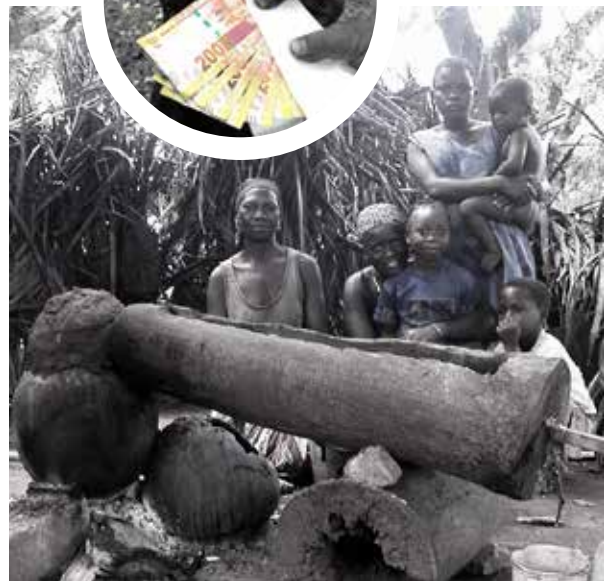
- Africa believes in traditional healers, *sangomas*, *inyangas* and *muthi*. These healers are effectively South African shamans! Will you

be able to convince Africans with a 2000 BC belief to change?

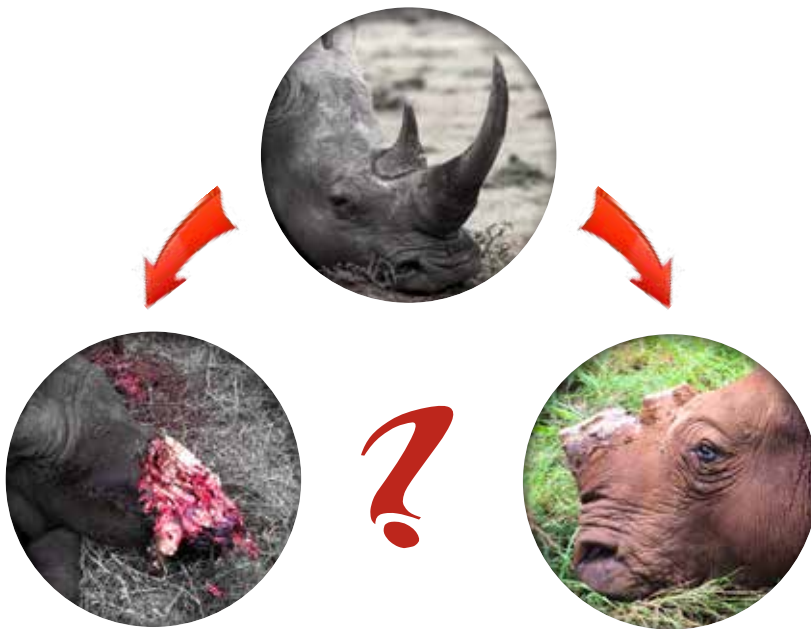
- If you are poor, really poor and starving with no food, luxuries or future, and you can earn thousands of Rands the next day by collecting a rhino horn (even if you might die in the process), will you not take that chance?
- Would you kill another man? Think again – would you? If you say, “Yes,” prove it! Remember, even if you kill with jurisdiction you must live with your conscience.

Western cultural arrogance

- Africa has traditions and beliefs.
- Eastern countries have traditions and beliefs.
- Why do you as a Westerner want to change ancient beliefs?
- Why are the majority of social media/armchair ‘con’-servationalists or anti-trade NGOs white? Less



YOU CHOOSE IF THIS RHINO LIVES OR DIES?



WHEN POACHED, RHINO DIE!! – HARVESTING HORN WON'T HARM THEM

- Will you tell a dad his ranger/ rancher son is not coming home and will never come home again, because he was killed by poachers?

The answer: sustainable utilisation of a renewable natural resource (with strict martial laws)

- No more killing of rhinos.
- National parks and reserves with strict martial laws if illegal hunting is attempted to counter criminals to create parallel illegal markets to launder illegal horn.
- Let the poor communities bordering protected areas farm rhino and harvest the horn legally with secure mechanism by which to trade the horn; only then will rhino be protected by people bordering protected areas where rhino occur.
- Let wildlife ranchers protect the rhino through the production and harvesting of horn.
- Yes, there are people that will get rich, but at least we (the rangers) and the remaining rhino population will be alive...

Strict and secure controlled trade

- With current science and technology, rhino horn is traceable and manageable.
- DNA identification is possible to ensure registration and marking of legal rhino horn.
- There is a demand and South Africa can supply the commodity, without killing a single rhino.

If sustainable utilisation is implemented, controlled legal trade secured and all killing of rhinos banned, there will be no more reason for us (rangers) to feel guilty if we kill a rhino poacher exercising a criminal act. Only then it will be fair to kill another person.

than 10% of donated funds to protect the rhino reach ground level. The majority of the funds are utilised on offices, cars, Wi-Fi, meetings and other luxuries to sustain their lifestyles and comfort.

- Why do you shout, "Kill the poacher?"
- Who must kill the poacher? The ranger?

STOP THE KILLING!

- Stop the killing of all rhinos.
- Stop the killing of people (mostly poor people who are forced to take a chance to poach).
- Stop the killing of rangers.
- Why kill each other over a commodity if there is a solution without killing?

Supply and demand

- You will never stop the demand; it was there before you were born and it will be there after you die.

• Why have we lost more than 3 600 rhino in the past seven years in South Africa alone, 95% of the 100 000 black rhino have been lost on the African continent since 1960 (95 000 black rhino killed), when there is a solution?

- Those thousands of rhinos are gone forever!
- We, the custodians, are responsible for those deaths!

Death sentence

- How can you give orders to kill a man if there is no death sentence in South Africa and the country is not at war?
- How can you expect a ranger to sentence someone to death and execute him in a split second when it takes a High Court judge months to decide on?
- Will you tell a child his ranger/ rancher dad is not coming home and will never come home again because he was killed by poachers?



DR SAM FERREIRA

Sam M. Ferreira has a PhD in zoology. He worked on Marion Island as a biologist, co-ordinated the Richards Bay Dune Forest Restoration Research Programme, was employed as conservancy advisory scientist in New Zealand, and is the large mammal ecologist at SANParks. He has published 85 peer-reviewed scientific papers and regularly contributes to popular magazines and conferences. Sam is also chairman of RAGE.

For more information, contact Dr Sam Ferreira: sam.ferreira@sanparks.org or visit: www.rhinorage.org

CIVILIAN RESPONSES TO CRIME

- Rhino group effort

by Dr Sam Ferreira



A FEW OF THE RAGE FUNDRAISING INITIATIVES.



Rhino poaching has increased exponentially since 2008. South Africans, fed up with the illegal exploitation of their heritage, took matters into their own hands – LeadSA convened a Rhino Emergency Summit during 2011 and the Rhino Action Group Effort (RAGE) emerged from the resolutions adopted there. RAGE is a civil initiative that seeks to support co-ordinated efforts by several government departments, formal conservation agencies and the private sector to curb poaching.

Rhinos are commodities targeted by organised crime. RAGE acknowledges that the connection of rhino poaching to other forms of organised crime may lead to widespread societal degradation. Every law-abiding South African therefore has both a responsibility and a duty to blow the whistle on rhino poaching – it helps ensure the wellbeing of society as a whole.

A small group of people comprised of marketers, television and radio producers, public communicators, lawyers, scientists, rhino owners and tourist operators volunteer their

time to work intensively to achieve RAGE's vision. RAGE wants to see rhino deaths resulting from natural causes only – and that South Africans are not caught up in the illegal trade of rhino horn and organised crime.

This is a tall order and the volunteer group has been on a mission to gain support from the private sector and government institutions. It does this by co-ordinating information, gathering funding and expertise that complements efforts by government departments and associated agencies to curb rhino poaching.

The RAGE volunteer team has also tasked itself with changing attitudes to the use of rhino horn through information and awareness campaigns.

After the summit in 2011, RAGE instituted a national anti-rhino poaching reporting number to allow the public to blow the whistle on poachers and inform the Hawks, South Africa's Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation. RAGE also facilitated several intelligence investigations by raising and distributing R1 417 180 in support of the Hawks.

RAGE representatives took part in needs analyses to assist in the delivery of a co-ordinated approach seeking to ensure rhino security. Some R2 063 524 was raised for anti-poaching units, R561 120 for training anti-poaching rangers, R925 399 for the establishment of local response team nodes (including equipment and rewards for information leading to arrests), R600 000 for operational anti-poaching costs in Kruger, R77 000 for ranger wellbeing and R111 250 for the printing and distribution of crime scene support documents to assist with prosecutions.

RAGE's marketers, television and radio producers and public communicators made this possible, with outstanding fundraising initiatives allowing 95% of RAGE's annual income to be distributed for rhino initiatives. Since its inception, RAGE has raised R8 400 000 in funding.

RAGE took on the challenge as part of the co-ordinating tasks assigned to its volunteer team that facilitated a website-based provision of trusted and vetted fundraising agents. This resulted in a government-driven NGO summit for co-ordinated fundraising



FULLY EQUIPPED TRAILERS, NOTICE BOARDS AT KRUGER NATIONAL PARK GATES AND VEHICLE SUPPORT FOR ANTI-POACHING UNITS ARE AMONGST TANGIBLE PROJECTS FUNDED BY RAGE.



activities. Of course, RAGE could not achieve any of its goals without the support of many individuals and organisations.

How did the activities of the RAGE volunteer team affect rhinos? Ultimately, it is a numbers game – a scoreboard of poached and live rhinos. Success will occur when poaching is reduced and when rhino populations grow.

Integrated approaches using focused intelligence and task teams, supported through funding and expertise such as that facilitated

by RAGE, can make the difference. RAGE learnt a very important additional lesson – co-ordination of integrated efforts is really hard for a civil action group. It works when government is the driver.

RAGE will continue to raise funds to support projects associated with the implementation of South Africa's integrated rhino-management strategy, and importantly, RAGE will seek to inform South African citizens of the threat of crime, including the threat of poaching, to rhinos and the wellbeing of people.



JOHN HUME



Letter from John Hume to *Wildlife Ranching* magazine, Thursday, 2 July 2015:

I have 1 153 rhino and they are very seriously threatened with extinction in the near future unless I can continue to pay for the project. After a recent spate of poaching incidents, my security costs have gone up from R640 000 to R3m a month and this is simply not sustainable. Even if I sold all the progeny after replacing those who died, I would come nowhere near to paying my running costs. The only feasible way to save my rhinos from extinction is to sell their horn – which is, after all, a sustainable, natural product that I need never kill a rhino to produce.

This is why I am approaching the courts to do away with the moratorium and give me back my constitutional rights. Of course, dropping the CITES ban on the sale of rhino horn would be first prize. But this is not within the jurisdiction of our courts, unfortunately, and my belief is that our government will not do the necessary for the international community to rescue our rhino at the CoP meeting next year in South Africa. So we will have to make do with second prize, which is removing the moratorium.

For more information, contact John Hume: john@mgame.co.za

HIGH-COURT CHALLENGE: TRADE MORATORIUM ON RHINO HORN

by Izak du Toit

Seymore, du Toit & Basson Attorneys: www.sdblaw.co.za

On 13 February 2009, the erstwhile Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, Martinus van Schalkwyk, promulgated a domestic moratorium on the trade in individual rhino horn and rhino-horn derivatives in South Africa. This moratorium was promulgated for the supposed purpose of addressing the alarmingly escalating incidence of rhino poaching at the time (2008 and 2009).

The moratorium was purportedly implemented as a temporary measure in order to afford the said minister and his department the opportunity to investigate a long-term solution to the rhino poaching crisis. It is an unfortunate fact that, whatever measures have been implemented since February 2009, and whatever feasibility studies were conducted, or perhaps are

still being conducted by the current Minister of Environmental Affairs, Edna Molewa and her department, the brutal onslaught of rhino poaching has spiralled out of control and the very survival of the species is at immediate risk.

Private rhino owners and the wildlife industry have historically adopted an accommodating approach to the minister and her department and this approach and subsequent working relationship have achieved positive outcomes for both the industry and the department on various fronts. This is, however, with the exception of the rhino poaching crisis.

The principle of sustainable utilisation of renewable natural resources is entrenched in the South African legislative environment. More specifically, it is stipulated in the Constitution of the Republic of

South Africa. This constitutional principle has also been carried forward into national legislation (the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act) and furthermore promoted in the Threatened or Protected Species (TOPS) regulations. The moratorium therefore constitutes a material limitation on the constitutional rights of private rhino owners in South Africa and as such the Private Rhino Owners Association (PROA) and Wildlife Ranching South Africa (WRSA) have conducted extensive and ongoing negotiations with the said minister and her department in order to find a solution to the rhino poaching-crisis while still affording the private rhino owners their constitutional rights.

Regrettably, the abovementioned negotiations have not resulted in the alleviation of the rhino-poaching



NORTH GAUTENG HIGH COURT, PRETORIA, SOUTH AFRICA.

crisis. At the same time and very ironically, the private rhino owners have been severely burdened with the horrifically escalating cost of anti-poaching and rhino security in their endeavour to protect rhino as a national heritage.

It is as a result of the abovementioned unfortunate process that the private rhino breeders found themselves in an impossible position, with no other option but to approach the High Court of South Africa in order to reinstate their constitutional right to generate a viable income from the sale of rhino horn as a renewable natural resource, to fund their ongoing war against unscrupulous rhino poachers.

The court challenge was initially instituted by Johan Kruger, an individual wildlife rancher, during the year 2012. At that point in time, PROA and WRSA considered it prudent to abide by the decision of the court and with the specific intention and expectation that an amicable and workable solution would be found through diplomatic negotiations and co-operation with the minister and her department.

It is an unfortunate fact that such negotiations have yet to produce

a tangible result on the ground and on the forefront of the war against poachers. The specific and horrifically increased incidence of poaching during the first half of 2015 finally served as a trigger to motivate the largest private rhino breeder in the world, John Hume, with support from WRSA and PROA, to intervene in the pending court battle between Johan Kruger and the minister. This intervention application was served at the end of May 2015 and the matter was initially heard in the High Court of South Africa, Gauteng division (Pretoria) on 15 June 2015. The minister opposed the intervention.

The three judges adjudicating the matter found it appropriate to allow the intervention by John Hume, WRSA and PROA and expressed plausible insight into the urgency of the matter. As a result, the matter was prioritised and all parties were ordered to abide by certain agreed time periods for the exchange of further court papers. The final court date for adjudication of the matter was set for 22, 23 and 25 September 2015. This in itself presents a clear indication that the seriousness of the rhino poaching

crisis has escalated to the level of the judiciary and it is indeed comforting to have noted that the notoriously slow wheels of justice turned rapidly in this instance for the sake of finding a solution to this unfortunate crisis.

Despite this court battle, PROA and WRSA have not discarded their diplomatic approach of negotiating with the minister and her department. Instead, the industry trusts that the minister and her department will approach the matter with the same level of urgency illustrated by the three judges of the High Court. Notwithstanding the fact that the subject of a possible legal trade in rhino horn has for many decades been a controversial issue, South Africa should be able to find a solution to this crisis for the sake of survival of the species. The solution can only be workable if the principles of conservation, sustainable utilisation and constitutional rights of private individuals are balanced and integrated into a mutually beneficial plan of action.

The court's expected decision in September 2015 will hopefully guide such a plan.



JANE WILTSHIRE

Jane Wiltshire is currently completing her doctoral thesis in corporate finance through the International School of Management in Paris. An interest in the economics of crime started many years ago, while an interest in rhinos started when she saw her first one at the age of five. She has been requested to submit her article on a regional industrial cluster based on rhino horn to an international peer-reviewed journal.

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AN ASSESSMENT OF THE ANTI-TRADE ARGUMENTS

by Jane Wiltshire

FUTURE – MYTHS



FUTURE – FACTS



potentially dangerous – legalising trade could:

- *send the wrong signals, so undermining demand-reduction campaigns; and*
- *ignite demand by removing the stigma effect of an illegal substance (an increase in poaching of elephants has been attributed to the recent one-off sale of ivory).*

INTRODUCTION

Many dedicated and passionate rhino lovers are vehemently against the legalisation of a rhino-horn trade. These arguments have a natural resonance with many of us, but how valid are they?

This article will examine the available evidence and with common-sense reasoning answer the following question: will a continued trade ban increase the probability of survival in the wild of the two South African rhino species

as well as diminish the poaching of rhinos in southern Africa?

Although every argument and counter-argument can (and should) be pursued in far more depth and at more length, this article will, of necessity, deal with the debate at a high level and is therefore not exhaustive.

6 ANTI-TRADE ARGUMENTS

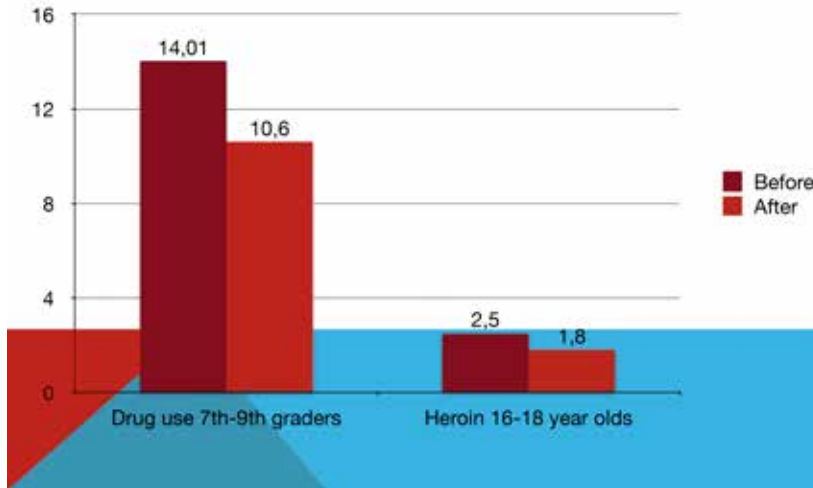
These will be grouped into six broad themes, which are dealt with below:

- 1. The precautionary principle**
Don't take an action if the consequences are uncertain or

However, demand reduction campaigns have been successful for legal substances such as tobacco and shark fins. A large decrease in usage can be caused by unbanning, such as in Portugal's legalisation of drugs in 2001.

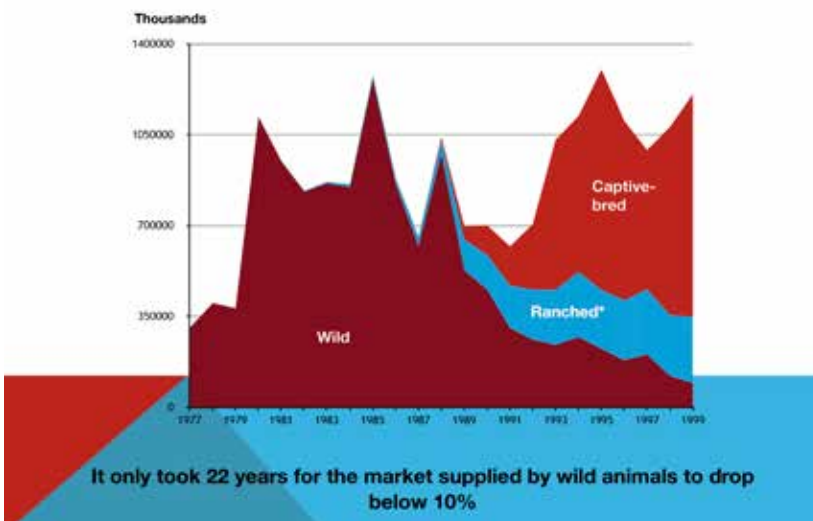
Demand as expressed by the increase in poaching in southern Africa has grown exponentially under a trade ban. Although the precautionary principle is wise under most circumstances, it doesn't hold in the current circumstances, which

CONSUMPTION HAS GONE DOWN IN PORTUGAL POST LEGALISATION



(GREENWALD, 2009)

AFTER CROCODILE SKIN FARMING WAS LEGALISED IN 1977....



(GREENWALD, 2009)

are so dire that they could lead to catastrophe. Continuing with the current, patently failing prohibition regime is foolish and reckless, and will lead to the end of the wild rhino population in southern Africa.

The rise in elephant poaching could just as easily be ascribed to the simultaneous announcement of a minimum seven-year moratorium of legal sales.

Therefore, the arguments for the precautionary principle don't hold up under scrutiny.

2. A viable trade is impractical because

- *South Africa does not have the competence to manage a legalised trade, and corruption will further undermine viability;*
- *the ultimate demand is unknown and could be too big to be satisfied sustainably;*
- *there is no guarantee that current illegal market participants would switch to legal channels;*
- *it will take too long to establish a legal market; and*

- *a legal market will ease the laundering of illegal horn and lead to increased poaching.*

South Africa has demonstrated its ability to establish and run competent, non-corrupt and world-class legal markets for our products. The South African Sugar Association, which was established by statute and run by competent and professional managers appointed by the private sector, is one of many.

Corruption flourishes where a product that has a strong demand is prohibited and withers when the ban is lifted, as happened after the repeal of the 18th Amendment (prohibition of alcohol) in the United States.

Scientific methodology suggests that experimentation is the best method for removing uncertainty and a controlled legal trade with a regular, reliable supply would provide the opportunity to better determine price and underlying demand. Should the market prove to be unsustainably large, at least some of the profits will have flowed into the hands of rhino owners and allowed range states to convert their rhino horn stockpiles from a liability into a liquid asset.

Many examples show that market participants value convenience and reliability and have switched to legal supply, as is demonstrated by what happened when the trade in crocodile skins was legalised.

There is no reason why a legal market should take inordinately long to set up – South Africa already has the expertise in this area. Many ancillary services, such as the precious cargo handling at OR Tambo International airport in Johannesburg, already exist and are 'best of breed'.

While it is possible that laundering will increase, this is unlikely to lead to a sustained increase in demand for poached horn as South Africa already has a sophisticated horn-tracking system based on DNA, isotopes and chip monitoring in place and/or ready to go. In addition, illegal horns already in the pipeline and in speculators' hoards will tend to be sold first. Finally, if the trade is correctly structured, buyers of horn will 'police' illegal sellers and provide more funds for authorities to counter laundering.

3. Ethical and 'moral hazard' issues

South Africa shouldn't promote a legalised trade in rhino horn as:

- *it would be unethical to sell a product that we believe not to be efficacious; and*
- *there is a possibility that a proposal for an amendment to CITES would fail and embarrass South Africa as the hosts of CoP17.*

The world has been able to come to terms with selling products that are proven to be harmful, such as cigarettes. So why should it be an insurmountable obstacle to sell a product that is unlikely to be harmful and could be beneficial, even if it is only via the placebo effect?

South Africa has a proud history of pursuing what is effective and not necessarily popular in protecting and growing our wildlife. It would be a sad day if fear of failure or ridicule stopped South Africa from doing what the country believes is right.

4. A legal trade will not reduce poaching as there is a preference for 'wild' horns

Even if it were true that *all*

consumers know the source of horn and are prepared to pay for it (an unlikely scenario), there are a large number of whole, wild horns in stockpiles and more are added every year from natural mortalities of un-dehorned rhino. A legal trade would demonstrate such a preference and its concomitant price premium. Even if the requirement is only for whole, 'wild' horns, the sale of the stockpile horns should, at least, prevent or delay the poaching of a large number of rhino.

5. Cruelty and greed

- *Legalising horn trade is wrong as it can lead to an increase in rhino poaching and dehorning.*
- *Ranching rhinos is inhumane.*
- *A legalised trade will benefit already wealthy, greedy rhino owners.*

This assumes that not only is rhino ranching inherently cruel, but also implies that it is crueller than the slaughter and butchery of the animals. The majority of rhinos are 'ranch'd' in that they are enclosed within boundaries, even if that is in national parks. The most intensive, large-scale commercial operation has a stocking rate of one rhino per six hectares, which does not seem to distress the animals at all. The operation has an extremely good breeding history, suggesting contented animals.

South Africa has a draconian system of controls and permits in place for private rhino owners, so any abuses could be controlled via the enforcement of existing laws and regulations.

South Africa is a free-market economy; why, then, should making a profit be a reason not to do the right thing?



6. Economic theory

The economic theory underpinning trade arguments is too deeply flawed to risk legalising trade.

Judgement is often based on 'A review of the Economic Analysis of Wildlife Trade' (Nadal, Aguaya 2014). This 40-page working paper warrants an equally long response; it is severely flawed. However, for the purposes of an overview such as this, it is sufficient to observe that it has three major flaws that render its pre-eminent position unfounded:

- It confines itself to theoretical economics and doesn't consider any practical 'experiments';
- it only examines pro-trade arguments and doesn't give similar scrutiny to anti-trade arguments; and
- it adopts the method of looking for a real or (often) apparent flaw in the pro-trade argument and then concludes that the whole argument is flawed, no matter how immaterial the flaw might be.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT

Although the anti-trade arguments have a strong intuitive resonance with many *rhino lovers*, they do not stand up to logical assessment and should be vigorously questioned.



MICHAEL EUSTACE

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SMART TRADE

by Michael Eustace



Astonishingly; South Africa can sustainably supply the market with 1 500 horns a year and satisfy demand without the need to kill one rhino. All the killing is actually absurd.



In 2014, about 1 500 horn-sets were sold from Africa to the Far East – that was the extent of supply and demand. Some 1 500 horns were sold and 1 500 bought. The trade was illegal, with all the profits going to criminals. It required the killing of 1 400 rhino and the other 100 horns came illegally from stocks.

Astonishingly, South Africa can sustainably supply the market with

1 500 horns a year and satisfy demand without the need to kill one rhino. All the killing is actually absurd.

South Africa is considering putting a proposal to CITES to permit a legal trade – something that seems fundamental. To help the decision-making process, there needs to be a clear idea of what form trade will take. There are some important choices to be made.

At the one end of the spectrum is free trade, and at the other end is a highly controlled trade of a monopoly, selling to a cartel of retailers, that I like to call ‘smart trade’ because it would be a more astute effective way of reducing poaching.

Free trade implies that anyone in possession of legal rhino horn can sell it to anybody wanting to buy. Most goods are traded in that



China should agree to be our partners in trade, subject to CITES first agreeing to trade. Why would they not prefer a legal trade? Nobody wants to accommodate criminals.



way and buyers benefit from the competition among the sellers. Competition leads to lower prices and lower prices are good for the buyers.

But in the rhino horn market, you do not want competition amongst the sellers if it leads to a drop in the horn price, because that will lead to higher demand, which cannot be satisfied in the long term. If you sell 3 000 horns a year at lower prices, you will run out of stock in five years. What then? Prices will rise and poaching will increase. We have 6 000 horns in stock, but they are not all in good condition.

A Central Selling Organisation, or CSO, that controls volumes and prices would be a better plan. The CSO can sell 400 horns a year from stocks, 300 from natural deaths, and 500 from farmed horn. That makes 1 200 horns. Some poaching will continue (perhaps 200 horns) and speculators will turn sellers of, say, 100 horns. That will mean a total supply of 1 500 horns, which will satisfy the market at US\$60 000 per kilogram. That is the same position as in 2014.

These numbers are conservative; we probably have the capacity to sell 2 000 horns sustainably.

Private ranchers own 25% of the South African national herd and might be given a quota to sell 300 horns. They will pay tax on the profit. The other 900 horns should be sold by South Africa's national parks and game reserves.

Both the designated protected areas and the private sector are committed to helping communities along their borders to start farming rhino. Communities can be part of the overall quota, and they could both make a profit of up to R250m a year from harvesting horn, by far the most profitable enterprise available to them, at the same time as aligning their interests with the protected areas.

There will be no room for corruption. Cheques will be made out by the CSO to the designated protected areas and to the Private Rhino Owners Association (PROA) – and nobody else. The CSO will charge 3% commission on sales and 97% of the proceeds will be ploughed back into conservation. The CSO

will be owned by government, but the management should be outsourced to skilled traders. It will be no more than an efficient broker. Sales could be held in a secure room at O R Tambo airport. Parcels of horn would be offered to approved buyers at a set price, take it or leave it. Once payment has been made, the horns could be loaded onto an aircraft bound for China.

There is nothing new about this model – it was practiced and perfected by De Beers, which sold diamonds in this way for over 50 years. I have talked to the past leaders of De Beers about a horn CSO and they are enthusiastic about it; indeed, they are happy to help with advice.

There is scope for Namibia, Zimbabwe, Swaziland and other range states to sell through the CSO and to be shareholders in the CSO. The profit from trade for Africa could be R1.5bn a year. If we control the poaching, in 10 years' time we should have 40 000 rhino as against the 20 000 we have now and we could be making profits of R3bn a year. Compare that with the current outlook for



our rhino. At the current rate of growth in poaching – 20% a year – there will be very few rhino left in eight years’ time.

The plan is for the CSO to sell to a cartel of retailers, probably the Traditional Chinese Medicine hospitals, or TCM hospitals, in China. Those hospitals will be licensed and, in terms of their licences, they will not be allowed to trade in illegal horn. There will be no opportunity to launder horn from the illegal to the legal market.

China should agree to be our partners in trade, subject to CITES first agreeing to trade. Why would they not prefer a legal trade? Nobody wants to accommodate criminals.

The TCM hospitals are owned by the Chinese government, which would make a profit of some R1.7bn (US\$144m) on the trade of

1 200 horns. They buy at US\$30 000 a kg from the CSO, and sell at US\$60 000 to the consumer. The Chinese government, being invested in the legal trade, will have an incentive to close down the criminal trade, and they will do just that. Having the Chinese government as a business partner is a critical advantage of ‘smart trade’.

I have not mentioned Vietnam because it is my understanding that between 70-90% of the trade in Vietnam is in fake horn, which is of little or no consequence to poaching. I would be surprised if Vietnam represents more than 10% of total trade in genuine horn. After hundreds of years, the market has not suddenly moved from China to Vietnam. It is more likely that the Chinese have set Vietnam up as a trade route into China on purpose, so as to divert

international criticism away from China.

However, if Vietnam is a significant market, we can establish a retail cartel there as well. It can also buy from the CSO and the Vietnamese government can tax the legal trade, which will give it an incentive to close down the illegal trade. Given a ‘smart trade’, illegal horn is likely to trade at a 30% discount to the legal trade price. That is common in illegal markets and is because of the risk of being caught trading in illegal goods and punished. Add to that risk the risk that some of the horn in the illegal market will be fake, or poisoned, and the illegal price is likely to be at a 40% discount to the legal price.

Lower prices for illegal horn will mean that the criminal trade will become much less profitable.



Current speculators, who are likely to be part of the existing criminal syndicates and who know the market, will turn sellers because prices in the illegal market will be set for decline. Instead of buying, say, 300 horns, speculators will want to sell, and even if they sell only 100, the turnaround will be 400 horns a year. That is very significant. Instead of encouraging poaching, the criminal syndicates will want to discourage poaching because it would lead to more horn entering the illegal market and devaluing their stocks.

With the price of horn having risen six times over the past 15 years, there are likely to be large speculative stocks.

Given a smart trade, the poachers will struggle to find a market for their horn. They will be forced into a small space where there is little volume.

In times of strong demand, the CSO can increase supplies. When demand is weak, the CSO can sell less. Having large stocks that it can access will be a great strength; it can limit demand to sustainable levels through the all-important price mechanism. In free trade, you cannot do that because you cannot control either supplies or price.

A monopoly selling to a cartel is unacceptable in most markets but it makes sense for rhino horn. CITES should find it more acceptable than a free trade. There will be much lower illegal prices and volumes, no speculators, no corruption, no laundering and a distinct legal channel. The result should be a regulated trade that lowers poaching and is of enormous benefit to the species and conservation.

If we used R1bn of the R3bn that we expect to earn in 10 years' time to manage and finance anti-poaching in Africa's protected areas, we could turn 100 to 200 of these from declining to thriving. If you can control poaching in these areas and only that, they will thrive.

With few exception, control of poaching is not happening at present and most of the protected areas are seriously underfunded. If you are sincere about the business of conservation and can use some of the proceeds of rhino horn trade to provide these much-needed funds it would be an investment of enormous if not incomparable value. What an opportunity!

Some fear that CITES will vote against South Africa's trade proposal. I doubt that. The ban is

not working and has never worked and there is a compelling case for a smart trade. But CITES is a highly politicised organisation and logic, and concern for rhino, may not prevail. That does not mean that we should not put forward a proposal for trade. If we believe that a smart trade is the right thing for rhino, then we need to have the courage of our convictions and submit a proposal.

The main opposition to trade comes from the NGOs. There are hundreds of donor agencies raising money to 'Save the Rhino'. Not one of them is pro-trade. Why? Perhaps a crisis suits them? It gives them purpose and money. Perhaps they are not looking for a solution? Donor agents have been influential at CITES but the world needs to understand their motives.

Smart trade is a simple and practical solution to the poaching problem. It is simple by design. Complexity destroys enterprise. It will not remove the need for law enforcement but it will reduce it and smart trade offers an extraordinary commercial opportunity for Africa's parks and game reserves and for some of the local communities living adjacent to these areas. I think it is the best option, by far, for our rhino.



DR JEREMY ANDERSON

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AN OVERVIEW OF THE PAPERS

by Dr JL Anderson

TWELVE MONTHS BEFORE CITES CoP17 IN 2016. MORE URGENT CALLS FOR LEGAL TRADE! SCAN THE QR CODE OR VISIT <https://vimeo.com/123707224> TO VIEW: 'RHINO IN CRISIS: A BLUEPRINT FOR SURVIVAL. SHORT VERSION.'



Despite well-funded anti-poaching operations and the dedication of conservation staff, the rhino poaching problem has become progressively worse and we continue to lose the war. A new solution to the rhino poaching tsunami is desperately needed.

In the preceding articles, several authors make the telling point that, after 38 years of the CITES ban on trade in rhino products, the situation is worse than ever. Several countries have lost all their rhino and others are now only considered 'range states' because of animals reintroduced from South Africa. These conservationists, all with long and illustrious track records, make a compelling case for South Africa to secure CITES approval to implement a sustainable legal trade in rhino horn. Revenue from horns would no longer go to the poachers but to the state and the rhino owners. Also, there would be no need to kill rhino to supply horns. This would provide sustainable funding for increased protection, bring benefits to poor local communities and reduce the escalating dependence on donor funding.

Opponents of legal trade are mainly well-funded and articulate people and NGOs, equally passionate about wildlife. However, unlike the above authors, the majority of these opponents have not been faced with the difficult decisions needed in managing the interrelationship of habitats, wildlife populations and the needs of

impoverished local people. Their solution is generally total protection and to raise and spend more donor money to fund this.

Dr Ferreira's paper illustrates the increasingly important role being played by NGOs and it indicates that government alone is now not able to curb the poaching. Therefore, is it rational today to expect that 'more of the same' is at last going to be successful in combatting rhino poaching, given the decline in capacity of the SAPS and many conservation agencies? I don't think so.

There is no article from the opposition on a legal trade, but Jane Wiltshire deals with most of their reasons for opposing trade and answers them well. She suggests that range states should be able to legally trade rhino-horn stockpiles, but it is premature to include all range states. Mozambique is a range state and it has less than 20 rhinos and is the source of most of the poachers targeting Kruger. Zambia and Malawi hardly have viable populations.

If South Africa submits a proposal for legal trade to CITES, then the proposal must stress that it is controlled by South Africa and restricted to those range states that still effectively conserve their rhino, these being South Africa, Swaziland, Namibia, Kenya and Zimbabwe. Any sales must be handled by a Central Selling Organisation (CSO) that is transparent and also includes private sector and NGO involvement, with CITES having the option of observer status. The country also

needs to correct the shortcomings as listed by Mike Knight.

Most of the key papers highlight the need for local communities to share in the benefits from sustainable production of rhino and rhino horn. Clearly, in 50 years, our human population will be such that the threats will not just be towards our rhino, but to the very parks themselves. For any chance of survival, both will have to be regarded by local communities as their jealously guarded assets that provide benefits for the people around them.

Dr Mike Knight mentions information that we do not know, in particular just how many rhino are privately owned. There are other important unanswered questions, such as:

- How accurate are the current estimates of our rhino populations? Do we have 20 000 white rhino, or is it 15 000 or even 12 000?
- How accurate is the number of rhino reported poached each year? How many carcasses are missed and orphaned calves lost?
- Is the recent increase in trophy rhino shot each year in accordance with best practice? Or are some landowners realising their assets before they are killed by poachers?
- Why is bail still being granted for foreigners caught poaching rhino? (A Mozambican kingpin caught last year has been granted bail and is now back home.)
- Are there any attempts to extradite known kingpins from Mozambique?



WHAT IS NEEDED FOR THE WAY FORWARD?

- Government must decide very soon whether it is going to apply to CITES for South Africa for approval of a legal trade in rhino horn.
- If the decision is positive, then the corrective measures and questions listed by Knight and the above need to be addressed.
- To gain their support, communities around protected areas with rhino must be brought into the value chain for the sustainable use of rhino and rhino products.
- An inventory is needed of all communal land adjoining protected areas with the potential to be developed for sustainable use of wildlife, especially high-value species like rhino and buffalo.
- Rhino management joint ventures between suitable communities and the public and private sector must be investigated and pilot projects developed.
- There must be a more accurate estimate of the numbers of rhino in the country.

It was most encouraging to hear that when South Africa's Minister of Environmental Affairs, Mrs Edna Molewa, recently paid tribute to game rangers working at the coalface of conservation, she called attention to South Africa hosting the CoP of CITES in 2016, pointing out that this will provide the country with an opportunity to demonstrate not just its conservation successes, but also to promote the sustainable utilisation of its natural resources as an integral part of conservation and economic growth.

At present, with our current rhino populations, a legal sustainable trade in rhino horn that will impact on poaching is the most feasible option in reducing poaching that has not yet been tried. Will government grasp this opportunity while it is still possible?

Or, in 10 years' time, will another Minister look back and say, "Yes, it is very sad. If only we had tried it when we still had the numbers. Now it is too late!"

