

**MEDIA STATEMENT ON ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY TO DELIBERATE ON MATTERS RELATING TO A POSSIBLE TRADE IN RHINO HORN
10 FEBRUARY 2015**

The Minister of Environmental Affairs, Mrs Edna Molewa today introduced the Committee of Inquiry tasked with investigating the feasibility of a trade in rhino horn.

On 22 January 2014 Minister Molewa announced that once pre-screening and vetting by the State Security Agency (SSA) was completed, that the names would be publically released.

The Department of Environmental Affairs also invited stakeholders to register to participate in the work of the committee.

The Committee of Inquiry embarks on its work ahead of the 17th Conference of Parties (CoP17) of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in 2016.

In the coming months the committee will consult with relevant stakeholders before submitting a set of recommendations to the Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC).

Due to the technical nature of the issues to be discussed by the Committee of Inquiry, a TAC has been established. The Technical Advisory Committee, comprising the Directors-General of the Departments of the Ministries represented in the Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC), will facilitate the processes and ensure that both technical and strategic matters are adequately addressed before reports and or recommendations are submitted to the IMC for consideration.

The IMC will meet as soon as the Committee of Inquiry and the TAC have finalised reports for its consideration.

It is important to emphasize that South Africa has not taken a position on the issue, and will not do so until the committee has completed its work and presented its findings.

Any proposal will be based on sound research, taking into account the terms of the London declaration.

“As government we have not in the past and will not in future be swayed by anyone with vested interests in either outcome,” says Minister of Environmental Affairs Edna Molewa.

Molewa added that South Africa prescribed to sustainable utilization principles, which in turn formed part of the Integrated Strategic management of Rhinoceros.

In January 2015 Minister Molewa updated the country on progress with regards to the integrated strategic plan, noting that significant progress had been made since the plan was announced in 2014.

The 21 member committee is chaired by Ms. Nana Magomola, and will report to the Inter-Ministerial Committee before the end of 2015.

The committee comprises a cross-section of stakeholders from both the public and private sector: leaders in their field who have been selected based on extensive expertise. This includes representatives from law-enforcement agencies, SANPARKS, the scientific community, the immigration service, the revenue service, the conservation industry, private wildlife owners, community organizations as well as non-governmental organizations (NGO's) and traditional leadership.

1. Mr. Lourence Mogakane, Chairperson: National Committee of People & Parks Programme
2. Hosi Ntsanwisi, representative of the National House of Traditional Leaders
3. Ms. Yolán Friedmann, Chief Executive Officer: Endangered Wildlife Trust
4. Dr. Jo Shaw, Rhino Coordinator (WWF South Africa)
5. Mr. P Gastrow, The Global Initiative against Transnational Organised Crime
6. Dr. M Knight, Rhino Management Group
7. Mr. Pelham Jones, Private Rhino Owners Association
8. Mr. K Lockwood, Economist
9. Mr. M't Sas-Rolfes, Environmental Resource Economist
10. Prof. J Donaldson, Chair of Scientific Authority
11. Lt-Gen. Elias Mawela, South African Police Services (SAPS)
12. Adv. J de Lange, Legal advisor
13. Adv. Pieter du Rand, Department of Justice and Correctional Services
14. Dr. Lyle Pienaar, State Security Agency (SSA)
15. Ms. Nthabiseng Malefane, Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO)
16. Ms. Mandisa Motha-Ngumla, South African Revenue Services (SARS)
17. Dr. Sam Ferreira, South African National Parks (SANPARKS)
18. Dr. David Mabunda, Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife
19. Mr. Johan Eksteen, Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency
20. Mr. Riaan de Jager, Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism
21. Dr. Wendy Annecke, South African National Parks (SANPARKS)

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE

- To investigate, evaluate, report on and make recommendations relating to a diverse set of key areas including, but not limited to:
 - I. An analysis of the current rhino situation and interventions to address illegal killing of rhino and illegal trade in rhino horn, with a focus on government initiatives;
 - II. Identification of new or additional interventions required to create an enabling environment for the sustainable utilization of natural resources and to strengthen the integrated approach of the government in addressing illegal killing and illegal trade, including the following:
 - § Increased involvement of communities, including community ownership of wildlife and benefit-sharing by communities;
 - § Establishment of Intensive Protection Zones, conservancies / strongholds and other mechanisms to ensure viable populations are established in low risk areas;
 - § Enhancing actionable intelligence to enable South Africa to disrupt transnational criminal networks involved in the illegal trade in rhino horn;
 - § The continued use of DNA as an important tool in terms of enforcement;
 - § Incentivising the trade and possession of rhino as a live commodity by developing an enhanced understanding of current forms of investment, drivers and incentives;
 - § Strategic, targeted, culturally sensitive demand management initiatives.
- If trade was to be an option, the potential models / mechanisms for trade and criteria / conditions (issues to be considered include: models – strictly controlled trade, i.e. once-

off sale of stockpiles, government to government trade or more open regulated trade; sources of specimens and specimens to be traded; the benefits and risks associated with the different options; possible trade partners and the criteria to be met by these States; conditions; and the financial mechanisms);

- The response / change in the market; implications; and the mechanisms to respond to that change (demand and supply issues and the anticipated changes if trade is introduced, interventions enhanced or new interventions implemented and the measures / interventions to manage or respond to these changes);
- The socio-economic impact and potential benefits to communities, farmers, conservation authorities and rhino and elephant conservation, including the economic opportunities for communities from wildlife management, and the risks posed by wildlife trafficking (e.g. infiltration of criminal elements in communities);
- the potential impact of various interventions and management scenarios on the conservation of the species, including range expansion;
- the implications and risks for enforcement and security matters and mechanisms to mitigate (dynamics of wildlife crime and the key issues to be considered in terms of addressing current enforcement challenges and anticipated enforcement challenges);
- implications for other range States, including precautionary measures; as well as implications for consumer States;
- the criticisms or concerns relating to trade and the means to address these criticisms and concerns;
- engagement strategies for the various role-players involved, with a special focus on communities; and
- key messages and information to be communicated.

Despite South Africa's efforts and a rise in the number of arrests and prosecutions for rhino poaching related crimes - poaching is on the rise.

Minister Edna Molewa notes that given the highly organized nature of the syndicates involved, the poaching figures could be considerably higher were it not for South Africa's interventions.

Among the measures being implemented are:

- strategic translocation of rhino
- increased collaboration between law-enforcement agencies
- disruption of criminal syndicates
- tightening ports of entry and exit to combat smuggling of illicitly sourced wildlife parts, including rhino horn
- collaboration with range, transit and end-user states
- providing economic alternatives for communities vulnerable to recruitment by poachers

The Committee of Inquiry will consider information submitted by stakeholders and invite organisations or individuals to present information to it for consideration.

A schedule of engagements/workshops being convened by the committee will be made available in due course.

- Interested stakeholders and organisations can register their interest to participate with Mr Mpho Tjiane through e-mail: mtjiane@environment.gov.za
- Stakeholders requiring information about the work of the Committee may contact Ms N Magomola via Mr Tjiane.
- All media requests must be directed in writing to Mr A Modise by email at amodise@environment.gov.za

**For media inquiries contact Albi Modise on 083 490 2871
ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS**

