



TAKING STOCK OF THE GAINS OF THE RHINO POACHING CRISIS

19th September 2013

Start

Rhino poaching is considered by some to be a low risk - high reward activity with an increasingly affluent market for rhino horn in the east, and this is responsible for driving the numbers of Rhinos poached ever higher. To date, a staggering 635 Rhinos have been reported as poached in South Africa in 2013, with the real numbers possibly being higher. There have, however, been some inroads into addressing the crisis and this World Rhino Day the Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) invites you to celebrate some of the *victories* achieved in the battle to end Rhino poaching.

“The EWT believes that there is no single solution to addressing illegal wildlife trade, which is an increasing global phenomenon, estimated to now be the third largest illegal industry worldwide after drugs and human trafficking. Wildlife trade often has its roots firmly established in organised and trans-boundary crimes. For this reason the EWT’s Rhino Project is implementing interventions at several stages in the poaching and wildlife trade chain,” said Kirsty Brebner, the EWT’s Rhino Project Manager.

These interventions include:

- Improving the detection of wildlife contraband through the deployment of wildlife detection dogs. Thus far the EWT has deployed four sniffer dogs at airports with plans to secure dogs in additional airports throughout South Africa;
- Improving the detection of wildlife contraband through capacity building and training with more than 100 border officials from OR Tambo International Airport having already completed training in Wildlife Trade and Environmental Legislation;
- Supporting and facilitating the reporting of information to the authorities;
- Supporting anti-poaching efforts in Zimbabwe by trialling anti-poaching dogs. Two dogs have been undergoing tracking training and will be trialled in Zimbabwe next week
- Deploying a rhino horn, arms and ammunition detection dog in Limpopo. The Belgian Malinois, Shaya, who has been deployed to Limpopo has been invaluable, particularly at finding evidence in the form of spent bullets crime scenes;
- Supporting selected provincial government organisations through the provision of equipment and resources. Fuel provided to Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency has enabled the Species Protection Unit to monitor their rhinos and microchip scanners have proven invaluable in assisting at crime scenes and for enforcement.
- Supporting selected private reserves by deploying a further sniffer dog in the Waterberg area;

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The Endangered Wildlife Trust is a non-profit, public benefit organisation dedicated to conserving species and ecosystems in southern Africa to the benefit of all people.

NPO Number: 015-502, **PBO number:** 930 001 777, **Member of IUCN** - The International Union for Conservation of Nature
The Endangered Wildlife Trust is US 501(c)(3) compliant under **US IRS Registration number:** EMP98-0586801.



- Implementing the Rhino Orphan Response Project, which focuses on improving rescue and rehabilitation through emergency response and training. More than fifty people have been trained in effective rescue response and there have been more than 180 responses to date
- Reducing the involvement of lodge and reserve staff directly or indirectly with poaching through the development of a community based awareness project. Furthermore, a DVD which directly links saving the rhino to jobs and livelihoods is being finalised
- Providing awareness raising and support to the judiciary involved in rhino poaching cases; and
- Influencing the legal framework to contribute to enforcement.

“Through the combined efforts of the Department of Environmental Affairs, South African National Parks (SANParks), the Hawks, several leading NGOs, corporates and individuals we have seen 194 arrests in relation to rhino poaching and horn smuggling take place in South Africa this year. Our sniffer dogs, Rico, Heddie, Renaldo and Condor have successfully located wildlife contrabrand at the country’s points of exit. Relationships have been established with key players in Vietnam and we are running awareness through reputable partnerships in that country,” commented Brebner. “Furthermore, the immense generosity and support received from all of South Africa’s citizens – ordinary people simply willing to make a difference – has been spectacular! South Africans have demonstrated their passion for their biodiversity heritage and the action taken by ordinary people to end the killing has been inspirational.”

As part of the 2013 celebrations for World Rhino Day the EWT has partnered with the Waterkloof Air Force Base. On the 19th of September the members of the Air Force participated in a competition where paper mache rhinos, spectacularly decorated by the individual divisions on the Waterkloof Air Force Base, were judged for their creativity, name and slogan amongst other things. The top 10 rhinos will be auctioned on the 25th October, with all proceeds to the EWT Rhino Project.

The battle against rhino poaching and wildlife crime is only just beginning and we urge you to keep demonstrating your support for the work of the EWT and other reputable NGOs and organisations. For further information about the EWT’s Rhino Project please contact Kirsty Brebner at kirstyb@ewt.org.za.

The EWT’s Rhino Project is sponsored by Bidvest Magnum, Anne Rimbault Pottery Studio, Carlo Antoni Collection, Opulent Living Magazine, Eukanuba, Hans Hoheisen Charitable Trust managed by Nedbank Wealth, International Rhino Foundation, Isuzu Trucks, Mones Michaels Trust, Pick and Pay, GivenGain, Walter Hirzebruch, Rhinose Foundation, Piccoli Nursery School and the Felix Schneider Foundation.

End

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