

pursued new paths that moved from parks into large-scale ecological zones and integrated economic development to ensure the stability of entire ecosystems.

At the same time, companies began to think about corporate and social responsibility, perhaps because of the advent of the Internet. There was more online discussion among communities, consumers and employees, and greater discussion about waste and environmental impacts. Companies began to think of environmental management in terms of their brand reputation, and this ushered in something like 'Conservation 2.0.' In this phase, we made meaningful progress in shifting how decision-makers think about managing our natural heritage and wealth, but again, with the forces of globalization bearing down and a narrow focus on protecting biodiversity, we fell short.

Today, I think we are collectively developing a way forward that will really work -- a 'Conservation 2.5' for the well-being of nature and people. In this operating system, the motivation for protection of nature shifts into an emphasis on the continued provision of ecosystem service delivery systems to people and businesses, or the flow of goods and services that our companies, governments, and families directly rely on to thrive. These services include our fruits and their pollinators, our coral reefs and their fisheries, plants and their medicinal benefits; our forests and glaciers and their clean waters; our mangroves and coral reefs that protect us from storms; our productive soils and nutrient cycles to cultivate food, and so much more.

What this has translated into is an increasing understanding that for a company or a nation to ensure

long-term viability -- what they both want to achieve -- they need to be able to incorporate into their principles strategies and values an understanding of economic contribution of nature and her services to their own survival.

The good news is that today, companies are much more receptive when we tell them they need to do things right, because they understand that their future is completely dependent on how they take care of nature. They're saying: help us, show us. We have never before seen as many companies hiring sustainability officers so they can anticipate how they predict the flow of the products they sell. We have never seen so many companies concerned about instability of energy supplies and the need to maximize efficiency and reduction of waste. Additionally, social media is shining an ever-watchful light on corporate behavior and procurement. Companies that make sustainability part of their DNA will thrive. Those that do not will falter. Collectively we have the power to motivate companies and governments to change.

If we can get decision makers to value nature's services, if we can help them understand that this is in their enlightened self-interest, then we can transition to sustainable development. It will take a huge amount of work, but there are big institutions out there that have huge energy which we can convert to work for us. I would not have thought we could do that 25 years ago. Today I think we can.

In founding Conservation International all those years ago we took a leap of faith. We jumped out on our own and built something against the odds. We're making the same leap of faith today. The next four decades are going to be a serious challenge as

our population soars to more than 9 billion in 40 years and 10 billion by the end of this century. Demand for energy, food and water is going to double and we only have one planet to resource this soaring demand. Conservation is not a luxury for times of wealth. It is a necessity. We have to work together now to set ambitious targets to ensure that we don't have islands of success in a sea of destruction. So we cannot slow down. Now we must intensify our combined efforts.

Peter Seligmann

Co-founder, Chairman, and CEO of Conservation International

South Africa

2011 has been a devastating year for the rhino population in South Africa.

The numbers are around 435 +. This is a staggering amount of the most incredibly majestic creatures, slaughtered to feed a ever increasing demand from Vietnam, China and Yemen.

Whether a National Park or a Private Reserve, the devastating effect of the rhino slaughter has been thrust at us with cruel reality. For the nature loving South Africans who prefer not to dwell on the harshness of nature, even they have been assaulted with the reality of the cruelty and brutality of the rhino poaching. The images we have been exposed to have been gut-wrenching and one cannot ignore the reality of the situation. As parents, we wish to shelter our children from these images, but our children are non-plussed that there is such cruelty that we just dont seem to be able to control.

There has been much debate and many proposals on how we should stop the poaching. There is no simple

solution to such a complex issue. There is much heated debate and each person has his own version of what will ultimately be the right approach. Each argument has its merit and what is really important is that there is a passion among the population to stop the poaching. How we do it is through a multi pronged approach. As long as we are not being counter productive, we are all working towards the same objective.

How much heated debate has raged about farming rhino, about legalising rhino horn trade, about concession hunting, about flooding the market with stockpiled horns, about dehorning the rhino and about poisoning the horns. As you read this I know you all have your favourite theory about each of these issues. We can debate the merits and de-merits of each of these and with all the best intention in the world we will never get consensus on the approach. Can we not agree to disagree on the strategy, but lets agree that we are ALL intent on stopping the rhino poaching!!



Photo from André Pieterse

Let us focus our funding and energy on the approach that we think is best... Let us all work towards assisting our rangers whether they are in private or National reserves. Let's support the legislators and law enforcers to ensure that poachers and carriers

are prosecuted to the fullest extent allowed in law.

We should be level headed and logical in our requests for our Government to put political pressure on the countries where the demand for rhino horn is skyrocketing. We lose credibility and respect when the demands we make are fuelled only by our passion and emotion. Lets keep those in control and stand together to request that our Government follow the international laws they have agreed to. Calm and logical reason, backed by facts and due process will be far more effective than emotional rantings. The intentions of all the action groups and companies supporting the anti-poaching initiatives are correct and deserve to be taken seriously. This is an extremely serious matter. It is truly a sad state of affairs and must be seen as one of the darkest years in rhino conservation since Ian Player took up the fight to save the rhino.

Let us stand united against poaching and renew our efforts in 2012 with dignity and passion and lets all work together in whatever way we can to move forward and tackle this problem head on.

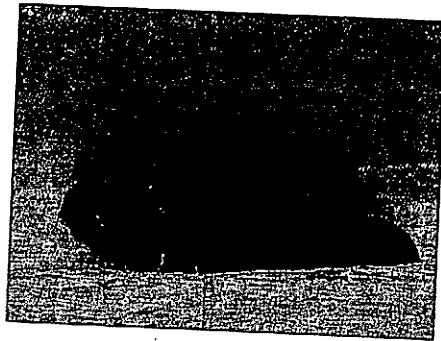
May 2012 bring us a swing of the pendulum in the direction of saving the rhinos.

Alaska

The Arctic wind blows hard on the snow-covered plains a few hundred miles southwest of Prudhoe Bay. It's eight degrees in the winter chill. Despite global warming, I am still quite cold. I watch the tracks of the grizzly bear disappear upslope as they narrow toward a newborn calf. Out of my field of vision its mother, a muskoxen – the quintessential land

animal of the Arctic – stands guard. But it is no match for the powerful predator looking for its next kill.

About 3,500 years ago, the last woolly mammoths died on a distant Arctic island in the Chukchi Sea. Muskoxen—mammoth's shaggy-coated Pleistocene contemporaries—still roam the Alaskan Arctic today. Muskoxen are known to many for their distinctive huddling behavior evolved for defense against predators like grizzly bears and wolves. Recently this prey-predator relationship has itself become the focus of a discussion on conservation tools and approaches.



Muskoxen huddling

Alaska maintains that hunting of grizzly bears may help sustain the herd of muskoxen that uses the Dalton Highway just south of Prudhoe Bay. But the pre-approval by Alaska for aerial shooting of grizzlies raises the broader conservation issue of how we sustain biological diversity in a given landscape and when – if at all – humans should intervene.

History teaches us that muskoxen have co-existed for thousands of years with bears, wolves, and sabered-cats. There are instances where bears get the upper hand, as has been the case for the small herd near Prudhoe. This might be because bears are smart or

because the vicissitudes of weather offer them a temporary advantage. In my work as a scientist observing predator-prey relationships in the Arctic, I've seen evidence of both.

The fact is, despite a global population explosion of humans since the last mammoths walked the planet, Arctic Alaska remains remote and spectacular. Within this icy realm, muskoxen are surviving. Yet that has not always been the case. The state went to great lengths to re-introduce the species after its extirpation from overhunting in the late 1800s.

Grizzlies can be key predators, and Alaska has a long history of removing predators to ensure that game is available to local hunters. Today, neither grizzly bears nor muskoxen are endangered in Alaska. Given that reality, should we protect the population of one animal at the cost of another? Or are some animals, as George Orwell suggested in his famous novella *Animal Farm*, more equal than others?

There is no clear ecological rationale for culling one species to augment another, and it is unclear how broad culling of bears will affect the muskoxen population. Predator control is too often a stop-gap solution to address problems created by human manipulation of the environment. To adequately address long-term conservation for wildlife populations, historical baselines, population dynamics and current stressors must be fully understood.

Whether predator control may be warranted is a decision that must be informed by science and made with great care – always asking if, why, and where interventions make sense. If humans are responsible for the altering of a system's ecological dynamics,

then perhaps targeted management action could be appropriate if carefully monitored to assess intended and unintended consequences. Human impact and intervention can tip predator/prey scales and redefine ecosystem hierarchy in unforeseen ways.

For example, predator control that largely eliminated large predators has been shown to impact both prey and other species. My published studies in and around Grand Teton National Park in Wyoming showed that the loss of large predators like grizzly bears and wolves led to lower birth rates of moose, a less healthy moose population, and diminishing song bird diversity and numbers.

Many questions remain in ecology, including why some populations fail and others do not. Band-aid solutions like predator control may not achieve, and can in fact be counterproductive, to accomplishing long-term conservation goals. In addition, Alaska's present decision to permit the shooting of bears from the air also raises fundamental issues on the importance to Alaskans and non-Alaskans of hunting ethics. North American models of hunting, some developed during the Teddy Roosevelt era, have a rich history steeped in doctrines touting fair chase. The essential question: Who decides what is fair chase?

But the larger issue goes beyond muskoxen and aerial hunting of bears. If we wish to send a message to other nations about how to best conserve and use wildlife, we must lead by example and be dedicated in our own approach to thoughtful conservation practice grounded in science, long-term vision, and respect for all species

Dr. Joel Berger WCS