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Dedicated to the People and Wildlife of Africa

Deputy Minister Mabudafhasi Is Committed to the Professional Hunting Industry of South Africa

Extracts from the Address of Her Excellency, SA Deputy Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs, Ms Rejoice Mabudafhasi to PHASA Delegates

The hunting industry makes a valuable contribution to the economy of our country and according to a report compiled by the Department, based on information provided by the provincial conservation authorities, the revenue generated directly through hunting, during 2009, amounts to R650 million. Owing to the forward and backward linkages of the hunting industry, the impact of the industry, both direct and indirect, is far larger than the aforementioned amount. I was informed that the study conducted by the North West University in 2007, indicated that the total contribution of your industry amounted to approximately R7.7 billion and this is quite significant.

I further value your active participation in government initiatives and processes. To mention but a few; your involvement in the Wildlife Forum; participation in the Round Table that my Department convened in May 2010, and the Minister's Rhino Summit in October 2010; the NGO Summit of two weeks ago, and in particular, in the legislative development processes. Your contribution to skills development and job creation within the environmental sector deserves to be mentioned. I am not sure how many other organizations can say that they have donated more than R2 million this year for the training of previously disadvantaged conservationists! I would urge you to continue with these initiatives, but to also focus on other initiatives to transform not only the hunting industry, but also the broader wildlife industry. Continued collaboration and cooperation between the Department and the industry can facilitate the development of such initiatives.

Acknowledging that you have concerns with regards to government processes that may impact on your industry, please allow me a few minutes to reflect on the progress made in terms of a number of issues:

1. The Hunting Norms and Standards is in the process of being finalized and I should mention that due to the amendment to the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act, that now provides the Minister with the

mandate to make regulations relating to the hunting industry; the final Norms and Standards will not include regulatory provisions.

2. The Department has just initiated the process to amend the Threatened or Protected Species (TOPS) Regulations as well as the Threatened or Protected Species lists. Where until now a permit has been required to carry out any restricted activity involving a listed threatened or protected species, I am positive that the upcoming amendment process will provide for much more effective implementation of the regulations, as we will now be able to exempt a person from many of the impractical provisions.
3. Although a complete proposal has not been developed yet, discussions are taking place to identify and explore possible areas for self-administration. I understand that this is an important aspect for the industry.

New government initiatives that have been given effect to during the past year include:

1. The development of a National Strategy for the Safety and Security of Rhinoceros populations in South Africa, which was necessitated by the increase in rhino poaching and illegal international trade in rhino horn. The purpose of the strategy is to reduce the effect of rhino poaching, ensure the successful prosecution of offenders and to improve the

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Affordable Private Jet Flying For CIC Members

Thanks to the initiative of our long time CIC member Bruce Lamarche (CIC Belgian Delegation), the CIC recently signed a long-term exclusive partnership agreement with Swiss-based LunaJets S.A., a broker company specialized in flights on private jets. They offer the best fare on private jets of all sizes (from 4 to 100 passengers) at anytime, anywhere in the world.

LunaJets uses empty leg flights (jets returning home "empty" so at the same time contributing to a more positive CO2 balance of transportation) and negotiated preferential rates with operators, to offer the best prices to their clients. Clients save between 10% and 80% compared to 25-hour membership cards and fractional ownership programs. With LunaJets there is no upfront payment. No long term contract. No monthly bill. No fuel surcharges and LunaJets has access to more than 3,000 safe and recent aircraft to find the most appropriate jet for any trip, and can find a plane within a 2-hour notice.

Transporting sport guns on a private jet is a much faster and simpler procedure than on commercial aviation. In addition LunaJets will always look for the closest airport to your final destination or hunting ground, saving a lot of time versus regular scheduled airlines flying to large commercial airports.

All CIC Members will be granted a special Privilege Preferential Code when they register for free on the LunaJets website. LunaJets will also present opportunities of private plane transportation to and from the next CIC General Assembly in May 2011 in St. Petersburg which will be described in detail in the next CIC print Newsletter. And what is absolutely unique and extraordinary is that LunaJets will automatically donate to CIC 10% of the net income of each flight booked with LunaJets by CIC Members or through CIC Members.

How to join? Contact CIC - International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation Administrative Office P.O. Box 82, H-2092 Budakeszi, Hungary, Tel.: +36 23 453 830, Fax: +36 23 453 832, E-Mail: office@cic-wildlife.org, Web: www.cic-wildlife.org

Frequently Asked Questions: Rhino Dehorning

Endangered Wildlife Trust's Rhino Security Project

The Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT), in recognizing a dire need to urgently address the rapidly escalating problem of rhino poaching in South Africa, has developed a project to strengthen the security of rhino in South Africa. The Rhino Security Project will address rhino security concerns on privately owned game farms as well as in formally protected areas; improve communication between rhino owners and the relevant government officials; support improved investigations into rhino poaching incidences; work with relevant bodies to identify causes and drivers of the trade in rhino horn; and enhance current knowledge on the demographics of rhinos *in situ* in collaboration with other

existing initiatives. Pursuant to the launch of the EWT's Rhino Security Project and in response to the recent spate of rhino poaching in South Africa, many individuals have suggested that a simple solution to this complex problem is to dehorn all rhinos. The following question and answers aims to give you some facts about rhino dehorning as a conservation tool.

Q What is the composition of rhino horn?

The conventional belief is that rhino horn is simply a clump of compressed or modified hair. Researchers at the University of Ohio in the USA have used computerized tomography, better known as a CT scan, to show that horns are comprised of calcium, melanin and keratin, and are actually similar in structure to horse hooves, turtle beaks, and cockatoo bills.

Q What is rhino horn used for in the eastern market place?

Rhino horn has several uses including: an alleged remedy against fever, gout, rheumatism, and many other non life threatening ailments, an alleged cure against aggressive cancer, ornamental use, an aphrodisiac (this is denied by the Chinese themselves), and Yambiya handles in Yemen.

Q Does rhino horn actually have any medicinal value?

In China, rhino horn has been used for Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) since 2000 BC and therefore belief in its medicinal properties is firmly entrenched. Modern science has been unable to prove definitively that rhino horn has real medicinal properties. Furthermore, claims that rhino horn has any medicinal value must be weighed up against the use of other more effective, sustainable and ethical products.

Q Can rhino horn be legally sold on the international market?

The international trade in rhino horn was banned in 1976 by signatories to the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). In 1993 the Chinese government also banned the use of rhino horn, or any other parts from endangered species, in Traditional Chinese Medicine.

Q Can rhino horn be sold in South Africa?

On 13th February 2009, the Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, published a national moratorium on the trade of individual rhinoceros horns and any derivatives or products of the horns within South Africa, in terms of Section 57(2) of the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act, 10 of 2004 (NEMBA). However, rhino horn may be traded as part of a trophy obtained during a legal trophy hunt.

Q What are the legal implications of dehorning rhino?

In terms of the Threatened or Protected Species Regulations of 2007 (TOPS) drafted in terms of NEMBA no person may, without being in possession of a valid permit: hunt, capture, kill, convey, import, export, keep live rhino in captivity, or possess a rhino horn.

Q Is dehorning an effective counter-poaching measure?

Poachers are prepared to remove any vestige of horns, including the small growth nubs on rhino calves, and therefore dehorning is unlikely to be an adequate deterrent. Dehorning will only reduce the temptation to potential poachers if the re-growth is cut regularly to ensure that the horn mass remains very low. Zimbabwe reported that their dehorning effort was successful, but only if used in conjunction with traditional counter- and an-

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ti-poaching measures such as regular patrols and population monitoring. The principle should always be to “maximize risk for the poacher and minimize his reward”.

Q What are the arguments IN FAVOR of a legal, regulated trade in rhino horn?

It has been argued that flooding the market with horns harvested from dehorned rhinos would reduce incentives for poachers. Several arguments have been put forward supporting the legal trade in rhino horn:

- Rhino horn can be obtained without killing the animal and it therefore represents a renewable resource.
- Lifting the ban on trade in rhino horn would allow range states to manage their rhino populations and generate funds that could be ploughed back into conservation, surveillance and anti-poaching activities.
- Considerable quantities of confiscated horn are now building up in warehouses, and these could be used to generate conservation funds (but see below).
- A reduction in the global price of rhino horn would reduce the incentive for poachers.
- Selling rhino horn legally would produce a much greater return per unit area than current activities in many conservation areas.

Q What are the arguments AGAINST a legal, regulated trade in rhino horn?

Legalizing the trade in rhino horn is a highly controversial and risky approach and some strong arguments have been made against lifting the ban:

- Even under a sustainable dehorning programme there may simply not be enough rhinos to meet the demand for rhino horn. In this case poachers would continue to kill rhinos from areas not practicing “rhino farming”.
- The relationship between the volumes of horn traded and the demands of world markets is not well understood and there is a risk that it is not possible to influence global prices.
- CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) demands proof of legal acquisition of rhino horn.
- Current stockpiles include horns of unknown origin, including those seized by the government agencies during enforcement activities, which can never be sold.
- Even with careful regulation, the establishment of legal trade routes could provide a front for trade from illegally obtained sources, as it may be difficult to establish the origins of the horn.
- Many governments do not have adequate resources to protect animals from illegal poaching, let alone to police a legal trade.
- The process of dehorning itself is a threat to individuals as tranquilization has inherent risks.

Q What needs to be in place to lift the ban on trade in rhino horn?

Ultimately, the decision to lift the ban on trade in rhino horn is not one that can be made by individual range states. Any decision to lift the ban on rhino horn trading would have to come

from the influential members of CITES. A non-detriment finding would also be needed for South Africa, to demonstrate to CITES that the trade in rhino horn would not constitute a risk to our populations.

Q Can dehorning be achieved without injuring the rhino?

A rhino's horn is not fixed to the skull of the animal but is almost an extension of the skin and is similar to a person's fingernails. Horns should not be cut too close to the skull as this can cause injury to the animal, infection can set in and the animal can die. Horns must be removed by skilled veterinarians.

Q How does dehorning effect rhino social behavior?

The Zimbabwean authorities embarked on a fairly extensive dehorning exercise in the past and they emphatically state that they could not detect any negative effect on the social behavior of the dehorned rhinos. However more research is needed into this issue.

Q Does a rhino's horn grow again after dehorning?

Studies in Zimbabwe have shown that rhino horns grow at a rate of up to 12 cm each year, and that horns of females grow slightly faster than those of males. Horns can therefore grow back to their original length and shape in time, but only if the growth plate of the horn is not damaged.

Q What are the additional risks involved in dehorning?

The biggest risk to the rhino is associated with the immobilization process, which is inherently dangerous and can be fatal. The biggest risk to the rhino owner is being in possession of the very commodity that poachers are after. Keeping of horns, especially in large numbers, exposes the owner to being the victim of potential criminal activity. A number of armed robberies involving the theft of entire stockpiles have already occurred in South Africa. The targets included museums, national parks, taxidermist studios as well as private individuals.

Q What should happen with the horns after dehorning?

A valid permit is required to possess rhino horn. Horns must be measured, weighed, micro-chipped and registered by a conservation official. The onus is on the owner to keep the horn safe.

Q What are the costs involved in dehorning a rhino?

Costs associated with dehorning include veterinary expenses (time, drugs), labor and possible air support – particularly in dense habitats. Depending on the circumstances, a dehorning exercise can cost in excess of R8, 000 per animal, but will be proportionally reduced if more animals are dehorned during the same operation. Currently these costs are not recoverable as the horns, once removed, may not be legally sold.

Q Can a rhino owner make use of “green hunting” to recover the costs of dehorning?

Green hunting is a practice where a third party pays for the opportunity to dart (immobilize) a rhino and to have pictures taken with the animal. The drugs used for immobilization may by law only be prescribed to a qualified veterinarian registered with the South African Veterinary Council. The South African Veterinary Council has declared green hunting an unethical procedure, which means that veterinarians may no longer take part in or facilitate green hunts. The Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism will no longer issue permits for green hunts and any person who takes part in such activity will be committing an offense. Veterinarians who are involved will be summoned before

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the South African Veterinary Council and may lose their license.

Q Will a dehorned rhino still appeal to eco-tourists?

It has been proposed that tourists would not be happy to see horn-less rhinos, however there have been no studies to date that have investigated the effect of dehorning on tourist preferences. If the reasons for dehorning are properly communicated it is possible that concerns about dehorned rhinos could be overcome.

Q What effect will dehorning have on the trophy hunting of rhino?

Trophy hunters are usually after the most prestigious trophy – the biggest or longest horn. Wide-spread and large-scale dehorning might therefore have negative impacts on the hunting industry which has been one of the incentives for the private sector to become involved in rhino conservation.

For more information on rhino dehorning and other rhino conservation matters please contact:

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Rhino Horn: Facts and Myths

Extracted from: *Tiger Bone & Rhino Horn: The Destruction of Wildlife for Traditional Chinese Medicine*, Richard Ellis 2005 Island Press, Hardcover: 312 pages, ISBN-10: 1559635320

Try this: Ask the person next to you what he or she thinks rhino horn might be used for in traditional Chinese medicine (TCM). Chances are, they'll tell you it is used as an aphrodisiac. It is not. In certain Asian countries, ground rhino horn is used to cure almost everything *but* impotence and sexual inadequacy. In Bernard Read's translation of the 1597 Chinese material medica "Pen Ts'ao Kang Mu", the complete section on rhinoceros horn ("the best is from a freshly killed male animal") reads as follows, with no mention of any aphrodisiac qualities:

"It should not be taken by pregnant women; it will kill the foetus. As an antidote to poisons (in Europe it was said to fall to pieces if poison were poured into it). To cure devil possession and keep away all evil spirits and miasmas. For gelsemium [jasmine] and snake poisoning. To remove hallucinations and bewitching nightmares. Continuous administration lightens the body and makes one very robust. For typhoid, headache, and feverish colds. For carbuncles and boils full of pus. For intermittent fevers with delirium. To expel fear and anxiety, to calm the liver and clear the vision. It is a sedative to the viscera, a tonic, antipyretic. It dissolves phlegm. It is an antidote to the evil miasma of hill streams. For infantile convulsions and dysentery. Ashed and taken with water to treat violent vomiting, food poisoning, and overdosage of poisonous drugs. For arthritis, me-

lancholia, loss of the voice. Ground up into a paste with water it is given for hematemesis [throat hemorrhage], epistaxis [nose-bleeds], rectal bleeding, heavy smallpox, etc."

Because it was believed to provide such a pharmacological bounty, it is perhaps superfluous for rhino horn also to serve as a love potion. How then did rhino horn acquire its aphrodisiacal reputation? Probably from Western writers who had only a passing acquaintance with Chinese traditional medicine. One such was J.A. Hunter, (who was reputed to have shot more than a thousand rhinos) who, in 1952, wrote: "The horns are worth thirty shillings a pound or more – ten shillings more than the finest grade of ivory. These horns are used for a curious purpose. Orientals consider them a powerful aphrodisiac and there is an unlimited demand for them in India and Arabia. No doubt any man who has a harem of thirty or more beautiful women occasionally feels the need for a little artificial stimulant."

Hunter tried it himself, but perhaps because he was alone, it did not work. "I closely followed the recipe given me by an Indian trader," he wrote. "Take about one square inch of rhino horn, file it into a powder form, put it in a muslin bag like a tea bag, and boil it in a cup of water until the water turns dark brown. I took several doses of the concoction but regret to report that I felt no effects. Possibly I lacked faith. It is also possible that a man in the bush, surrounded by nothing but rhinos and native scouts, does not receive the proper inspiration to make the dose effective."

In his 1962 study of the animals of East Africa, C.A. Spillage seemed to share the belief that Asians were interested in the horn as an aphrodisiac and were willing to pay handsomely for it: "On account of mysterious aphrodisiac properties attributed to the horn by certain Asiatic peoples, the Rhino has been sorely persecuted... With its horn fetching the present high price the prospects of its continued survival in the face of the poachers' onslaught are not very bright." The anthropologist Louis Leakey also shared this misunderstanding. In his 1969 book on African wildlife, he commented that rhinos were "in grave danger from poachers because rhino horn commands a high price in the Far East, where it is rated as an aphrodisiac." And in *S.O.S. Rhino*, C.A.W. Guggisberg asserted that: "The superstition that has done more harm to the rhinoceros family than all others is undoubtedly the Chinese belief in the powerful aphrodisiac properties of the horns. Through the centuries untold generations of aged gentlemen have been imbibing powdered rhino horn in some appropriate drink, hoping to feel like a twenty-year-old when next entering the harem!"

Even without aphrodisiacal properties, however, rhino horn is one of the mainstays of TCM, and its collection has been responsible for the death of tens of thousands of rhinos around the world. Make no mistake: those people who use rhino horn to cure medical ailments really believe it works. That's what drives up the demand on which the poachers thrive. As Ann and Steve Toon commented in 2002, "For practitioners of traditional Asian medicine, rhino horn is not perceived as a frivolous love potion, but as an irreplaceable pharmaceutical necessity." And Eric Dinerstein (2003), concurs: "In fact, traditional Chinese medicine never has used rhinoceros horn as an aphrodisiac: this is a myth of the Western media and in some parts of Asia is viewed as a kind of anti-Chinese hysteria."

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For hunter-conservationists and all people who are interested in the conservation, management and the sustainable use of Africa's wild natural resources. The publication and distribution of African Indaba is supported by the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation CIC www.cic-wildlife.org

