Presentation to the Panel on how to curb Rhino Poaching.

Good morning ladies and gentlemen,

My name is Carmela Lattanzi.

I am sure that everyone present here today already know the facts. So I will go directly to this presentation.

Presented by: Carmela Lattanzi
1. Legalization of trade in Rhino Horn

Ownership of a rhino is a very personal issue! A rhino owner doesn’t just own a rhino because he woke up one morning and thought “I’d like to own a rhino” We own rhinos because we LOVE ANIMALS! Private rhino owners fork out millions of rands every year to protect them, we don’t get grants and subsidies from government. Unfortunately the reality is – the cost to keep rhinos is not viable any longer and the funds do run out!

Private rhino owners have already begun selling their animals. Yet – we get fingers pointed at us when we say let’s legalize the trade. We get told that we are greedy farmers! But you don’t know the situation until you’ve been in it. It’s not about greed – it’s not about money, fame or glory !!!! It’s about financing security to keep the rhinos safe.

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If it weren’t for people like us trying to protect the rhinos and in doing so we risk our lives, our family’s lives our staff’s lives. I get told at least once a week “Sell the Rhinos” they are a danger to your life, they are a liability, they are just costing money... ... , the answer to all three questions is Yes, you’re right. But by selling them ... what are you dong? Transferring your problem to someone else.

If the poaching carries on the way it is – by 2027 we wont have any rhinos out in the wild. If we’re lucky we’ll still have a handful of rhinos with private farmers. We NEED to legalize the trade.

By legalizing – farmers will be encouraged to keep rhinos, it will be sustainable, we’ll be able to afford to protect them, breed with them and increase the numbers, preventing extinction. That is our main objective!

Presented by : Carmela Lattanzi
The main problem – we’re not going to change an ancient belief! I’m sorry to say – But what right do we have to judge a commodity that people have been using in Asia for thousands of years?
And in any case by the time (if ever) we have convinced the Asian market that rhino horn is only Keratin – it will be too late!
WE DON’T HAVE THE LUXURY OF TIME!! WE NEED TO ACT NOW. AND THE MORE WE DISCUSS THIS – THE MORE RHINOS ARE BEING KILLED!!
So as legal custodians to these animals let us do the right thing!
Flood the market - This will put poachers and the syndicates out of a job. Why would someone risk getting killed if they can buy it legally??
We have already tried banning it – it didn’t work!! In actual fact poaching has skyrocketed!
RATHER A DEAD MUTILATED RHINO OR A DEHORNED LIVING, HEALTHY RHINO?
Let us increase the supply this will decrease the demand. We can harvest rhino horn every 18 months without causing any harm to the animal. What do you think the rhino prefers..... a bit of tranquillisers or a .458 calibre through his/her heart ? THINK ABOUT IT !

For all those against the idea of legalizing the trade, I would like to make a suggestion .......

Can SANPARKS give a few rhinos to a few “PRIVATE” anti-trade individuals for a trial period of 6 months – I would be curious to see the outcome.

MY/OUR OBJECTIVE : TO SAVE THE RHINO’S FROM EXTINCTION & if it means that we need to legalize the trade – Lets do it !!
Quote by the late: Mr Ian Player (aka saviour of the white rhino)

Sell the horn stocks to reduce the pressure and finance conservation!

Presented by: Carmela Lattanzi
Legalization of rhino horn CONCLUSION / SOLUTION

I believe that by Legalizing trade and selling a quota of rhino horn each year, net profits should be invested in anti-poaching efforts, the population could increase by as much as 75 percent in coming years. I believe that a percentage of the profits from this type of enterprise should be given to protection and management of rhinos, it is an idea worth pursuing.

SUGGESTION

My suggestion : Get a system running (for example the Natis system for vehicles ) Each rhino horn should have a “certificate or title deed” and when you sell it – it should go through a central system (I would imagine that Cindy Harpur could have a solution for this – USING THE DNA TO ID EACH HORN)
2. Application Forms & Permits wrt to Rhino

- The system needs to be reviewed.
- Many poaching incidents have "co-incidentally" occurred just before or after permits have been issued.
- Possible leak? I don’t know – but it would be highly advisable to monitor the situation and investigate ALL staff working at the offices (from the tea lady to the highest official)
- Perhaps implementing a routine polygraph test?
• **3. LEGAL MATTERS**

- Harsher sentences for poachers, gun carriers, trackers, farm informants and other individuals involved – they will hesitate a little bit longer before taking on the next job.

- We should get Interpol more involved – fly to Vietnam/China and go get the KINGPIN! If trade was legal – we could negotiate with them and supply them legally! Without our rhinos being killed.

- **Transferring of older case dockets from Organised Crime Units to Rhino Task Team.** *(Rhino Task Team is better equipped and trained to handle such cases)* we would see more arrests.

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Presented by: Carmela Lattanzi
4. Across the border joint operations with police.

- Need to sign a treaty with our neighbouring countries giving the Rhino Task team full authority to cross the border and follow poachers into their homelands or “place of safety” and apprehend them!
- The same authority they have here in South Africa should be implemented into our bordering countries with rhino related situations.
- And they need to have the backup!
5. Government incentives for Rhino owners.

- Provide free or reduced equipment from a local supplier? (Government could provide: UAV’s with thermal equipment, trail cams on the fencing, Kevlar vests, and night vision goggles to the rhino Owner.)

- Introduce Rhino populations to local “Safe Havens” to the “previously disadvantaged” farmers – training and teaching these farmers the importance of conservation? This will create employment, skill, pride in our heritage, and an income.

Presented by: Carmela Lattanzi
6. Tax rebates on losses

- South African Revenue Services should consider tax rebates for private rhino owners.
- Every time we lose a rhino, we lose (besides a loved animal) about R500 000.00. (not counting the value of the horn)

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Biosynthetic engineering could protect Rhinos (and other animals like elephants & tigers) by giving consumers what they want. It is a process that takes rhino skin cells and bioengineers them into cells that produce the protein keratin that make up rhino horn. The science behind this process relies on what are called induced pluripotent stem cells, or iPSCs, taking mature cells and reprogramming them into an immature state that can develop into any cell of the body.
Increasing supply may be a solution to the poaching epidemic.

Scientists don’t want to create whole rhinos, they just wants to make their horns.

**CONS**

- Time is against us
- Will the Asian market buy this commodity.
- Will CITIS pose legal hurdles with regards trade in biosynthetic horn?

**PROS**

- We SAVE THE RHINO HORN from being removed!

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8. RHINO SANCTUARY

- Make available state ground in different locations to establish a rhino sanctuary (20-99 year lease option)
- Private Rhino owner Groups (registered as NPC’s) will manage these state properties.
- All our rhinos are placed into a “sanctuary”.
- We will be able to control the situation.
- Protect our rhinos.
- Implement a breeding programme.
- Income generated to be re-invested into the rhino Sanctuary. (either to buy new rhinos – to better the gene pool) or by upgrading security.

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South Africa tourism department has spent millions on branding the Big Five!!

Department of Tourism should also be contributing some of their budget to a rhino project.

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TEMPORARY SOLUTION THAT I WOULD LIKE TO SUGGEST FOR OTHER RHINO OWNERS.

- As a private rhino owner we’ve been targeted extensively in the last 12 months.
- Between 1st of January & 31st October 2014 – 10 MONTHS = 22 Rhinos poached.
- November 2014 - We started a group LIMPOPO RHINO SECURITY GROUP.
- November – 25th March 2015 (today) Almost 5 months = 2 Rhino’s poached
- That equates to a 82% decrease in rhino poaching in our area. (touch wood)
- We have many incidents of breaching of fences and entry – but we were lucky enough to prevent any other rhino poaching incidents.
- In the last 4 weeks
  - we have had 19 arrests (All in custody) of which one is a level 3 (caught the whole syndicate)
  - 8 firearms recovered

ONLY IN OUR AREA ! WELL DONE TO OUR TEAM !

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BENEFITS OF OUR GROUP “LIMPOPO RHINO SECURITY GROUP.

- Proactive counter poaching operations.
- Increased farm security & general awareness of surroundings.
- Effective response time from the SAPS Rhino Task Team.
- Dedication from everyone in the group. (Governmental & private)
- Team work.
- Effective co-ordination & implementation of resources.
- Intelligence co-ordination.
- Support system!

Might I add that we all have different opinions on our group with regards to trade.

But we all have **one objective ..... save the rhinos !!**

Presented by: Carmela Lattanzi
I implore each and every person to fight this war.
To help us save the Rhino’s! It’s our duty!

Presented by: Carmela Lattanzi
Thank you

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My heart beats for Rhinos