



environmental affairs

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Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

UNEP-GEF Project on Strengthening Law Enforcement Capabilities to Combat Wildlife Crime for Conservation and Sustainable Use of Species in South Africa with Rhinoceros as a target

Side-Event to the 16th Meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)
3-14 March 2013

INTRODUCTION

- Illegal hunting of Rhinoceros in South Africa has increased dramatically in recent years, with an average of 42 animals poached per year in the period 2000-2007, but increasing to 668 Rhinos in 2012;
- Rhino populations will be seriously affected if the illegal killing continues to escalate at the current rate;



CAUSES OF THE PROBLEM

- Increased demand for rhino horn from markets in Asia combined with high prices
- High levels of poverty in local communities in and around Protected Areas



KEY BARRIERS TO ADDRESSING POACHING

- Better understand and find ways to reduce the demand for rhino horn and its products;
- capacity for effective use of forensic evidence;
- mechanisms and institutional agreements for sharing of information on a national basis;



PROJECT GOAL AND OBJECTIVE

The main aim of the GEF project: to improve the forensic capabilities, data sharing and coordination systems of relevant stakeholders to better control poaching of rhinoceros in South Africa's protected area network, especially in Kruger National Park.

- **Goal:** To improve the conservation status of wildlife populations in protected areas in Southern Africa, and by extension elsewhere.
- **Objective:** To improve the effectiveness of efforts to combat wildlife crime in South Africa's Protected Area system, focused on Rhinoceros [through forensic-based technologies, improved data gathering and analysis, more efficient data sharing systems, and improved cooperation structures and mechanisms at international level to support prosecutions.



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OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS OF THE PROJECT

- **OUTCOME 1:** Improved and efficient forensic capacity (techniques, procedures, training, equipment and institutional arrangements) to combat rhino poaching in South Africa's protected areas and the associated illegal trade in rhino horn, with service providers put onto a sustainable financial and institutional footing [Increased use of forensic technology to combat rhino poaching and illegal rhino horn trade]



OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS OF THE PROJECT continues

- **Output 1.1:** Critical resources (equipment, personnel, etc) at key public- and private-sector wildlife forensics facilities (notably the Veterinary Genetics Laboratory (VGL) at the University of Pretoria and SAPS Forensics Laboratories) provided to improve identification and tracing of rhino horns for enforcement purposes, and these facilities put onto a sustainable financial footing;
- **Output 1.2:** New wildlife forensic approaches and techniques to tackle rhino poaching and associated illegal sale of rhino horn developed, piloted and if effective adopted in South African Protected areas;
- **Output 1.3:** Key crime scene personnel fully trained in wildlife crime scene investigation protocols and procedures with “good practice”, guidelines, and lessons learned developed and disseminated, and with necessary equipment provided for target Protected areas;



OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS OF THE PROJECT continues

- **Output 1.4:** ‘Legal professionals (prosecutors and magistrates) informed of relevance of different forensic evidence for tackling wildlife crime in South Africa, and importance of tough sentences as an effective deterrent
- **Output 1.5:** Dedicated institutional structure (provisionally a Wildlife Forensic Section) to coordinate and analyse all wildlife forensic evidence used to combat rhino poaching in South Africa’s PAs and through out the country, established and operational within SAPS, with long-term financing secured [could eventually be upscaled to a full Wildlife Forensics Service in South Africa]



OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS OF THE PROJECT continues

- **OUTCOME 2:** Improved gathering and analysis of relevant data and enhanced national coordination platforms for information management and threat forecasting to combat rhino poaching in South Africa's Protected Areas and the associated illegal trade in rhino horn [increased information sharing and cooperation to tackle rhino poaching and illegal trade in rhino horn];
- **Output 2.1:** Standard Operating Practices (SOPs) and database system(s) to collect and analyse restricted activities related to rhinos to better forecast and prioritise potential future restricted activities, which can then be mapped within PAs



OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS OF THE PROJECT continues

- **Output 2.2:** Secure, linked databases with information on individuals, populations, movements (restricted activities) rhino identification, provenance and other markers provided using DNA and other relevant techniques available to key provincial, national and regional agencies (DEA, SANParks, SAPS)
- **OUTCOME 3:** Protocols and mechanisms to fight rhino poaching in South Africa are developed and/or improved for better information sharing and cooperation at the regional and international levels, with a particular focus on the exchange of forensic data and samples, and capacity to implement these strengthened



OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS OF THE PROJECT continues

- **Output 3.1:** Relevant sections dealing with rhino poaching and illegal trade in rhino horn in the Action Plans for the Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) between South Africa and relevant countries (eg, Viet Nam, China, Mozambique, Thailand, Kenya, etc) implemented
- **Output 3.2:** Procedures established for the exchange of relevant data and samples of illegally traded parts and derivatives (with a focus on Rhinos) between South Africa and international enforcement agencies to assist with forensic investigations and criminal prosecutions
- **Output 3.3:** Participate in ICCWC's partners' operations regarding Rhino horn trafficking



OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS OF THE PROJECT continues

- **Output 3.4:** Identified Parties encouraged to participate in the CITES Rhino Working Group and other regional and international Rhino Focus Groups (eg IUCN/SSC/AfRSG and SADC RMG)



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THANK YOU



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