

Rhino poaching essay sample



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1. Introduction to Rhinos:

Rhinos are unique animals. There are 6 different rhino species (The White, Black, The greater one horned, Sumatran and the Javan Rhinos) around the world South Africa is home to two the Black and White Rhinos. Rhinos are more closely related to horses as opposed to elephants. They are massive, hoof creatures with extremely thick skin, bulky, strong bodies and at least one horn that extend from their noses. They are timid herbivores who have poor eyesight; they therefore rely on their senses of hearing and smell.

Rhinos are close to extinction if we do not save and help them they might become extinct as Rhinos only give birth once every 2 – 4 years. We are killing Rhinos faster therefore there is not enough time to reproduce. This could affect our rhinos and kill them for ever. 2. Relevant Topic?

I feel this is a relevant topic because we have almost or even more than half of the world's rhino here in South Africa. The Rhino is part of the big five we cannot afford to lose this wonderful interesting species. Rhino poaching has been a big issue over the past few years I feel we need to put an end to this. It can be seen on the graphs bellow that the Rhino poaching statistics have increase rapidly, more Rhinos are killed every year. Rhino poaching needs to be sorted out.

3. Rhino Horns:

Rhino horns are made of tiny tightly packed hairs. They are made of Keratin – the major protein components of hair, horn, hoofs, wool, nails and the quills of feathers. Rhino horns are composed primarily of keratin, but so too are rhino nails and so are our own finger nails! Scientists have discovered that Rhino horns have no nutritional value at all. 4. Poaching:

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Rhinos are poached for their horns. In certain Asian countries, ground rhino horn is thought and used to cure almost everything including sexual inadequacy. Rhino poaching is said to cure devil possession and keep away all evil spirits and miasmas. To remove hallucinations and bewitching nightmares. It 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. For infantile convulsions and dysentery. It can be turned to ash and taken with water to treat violent vomiting, food poisoning, and over dosage of poisonous drugs. For arthritis, melancholia, loss of the voice. It is also ground up into a paste with water it is given for throat hemorrhage, nosebleeds, rectal bleeding, heavy smallpox.

We can see from this long list that rhino horn whether it burned to ashes, ground or pasted it is thought to be able to cure almost anything. A more common belief might be that Rhino horns are powdered and used for Chinese medicine and the horn is used to cure hangovers and Cancer. Taiwan is supplied with most of its horns from South Africa and the horn is most commonly used for tranquilisers, for relieving dizziness, building energy, nourishing the blood, curing laryngitis, or simply curing whatever ails you. The Taiwanese make up most of the market for horns that are imported to Asia from Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe. Other research states that rhino horns are imported from Vietnam.

Habitat:

The most obvious reason for the loss of about a 1000 rhinos in 1800 to approximately 30, 000 today is because of poaching, habitat loss is also a

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key factor. Rhinos often die due to clearance of land for human settlement and agricultural production and logging. Rhinos are an umbrella species – species that are protected also protect other species. Rhinos share the same habitat as many of our animals. When rhinos are protected, many other species are too. Rhinos also attract visitors and tourists. A rhino is one of the most popular species with zoo visitors. Rhinos attract tourists who bring money to national parks and local communities. Rhinos are also one of the “ Big Five. With money we can support more programmes and not just save the populations but develop populations and increase the numbers of rhinos.

6. Law and Order:

Conservationists are obviously trying to prevent poaching from occurring, whether they do this by mounting intensive anti-poaching patrols which maintains high visibility or by fencing sanctuaries, or even by relying on locals to pass on their intelligence. However as much as we can patrol these locations. Areas where normal law and order has broken down has become much easier for poachers to kill rhinos and other endangered species. This therefore results in loss of Rhinos due to countries in conflict not taking control of the Rhino situation due to other issues.

7. Jambiya handles:

Rhino horns are also used for Jambiya handles but this is not very common now days. Back in the 1970s and 80s, horns from rhinos that were killed in East Africa mostly end up in the Yemen. Here it was made into ornamental handles for daggers (jambiyas). Although they can be made from precious metals, buffalo or plastic and they could be decorated by gemstones the Rhino horns are regarded as the Porsche version.

8. Income:

Due to the scarcity of rhino horns the price has increased, and this pressurises the decline of the rhino populations. For people whose annual income is often rather low, the opportunity to change one's life by killing a large, and seemingly “useless” animal must be overwhelming.

9. Legalizing horn trade:

Legalizing Rhino horn trade has been talked about a lot recently in South Africa. This links in with the idea of a one-off sale of rhino horn. The theory is that if South Africa auctions off the country's stockpiles, this will flood the market, meaning the price of rhino horn will drop and the incentive to poach will decrease. However the problem is that the issue is far from simple, and there are many complexities and uncertainties that critics have faced. The one-off sale would be difficult due to distinguishing between illegal and legal trade. It is also feared that the sale would increase a demand of the horn and poaching would increase.

However Advocates claim that current strategies to combat rhino poaching are not doing enough, and that the one-off sale could be enough to satisfy the current demand for rhino horn, reduce the price and reduce poaching. The South African government has around 16, 437 kilograms of rhino horn, the funds raised from selling this rhino horn could be used to ensure that more rhinos are better protected, while a trade solution is proposed. The funds raised could pay for rhino conservations, such as anti-poaching, security and monitoring patrols. Private landowners are struggling to keep rhinos on their land. Rhinos are predicted to be extinct in 2026. Similarly to

legalizing trade of Rhinos we could have a domestic trade. Landowners will earn money and will be able to afford better security on their land. 10.

Dehorning:

A horn defines the rhino. Dehorning is a process whereby Rhinos are usually darted from a helicopter, but occasionally from the ground in smaller reserves. A pen is used to mark the point of removal - usually 7cm from the base of the front horn and 5cm from the base of the back horn. While under anaesthesia, a chainsaw or hand-saw is used to cut the horn off horizontally. Eyes and ears are covered to prevent noise / disturbance / damage from the saw. The stump is trimmed to remove excess horn at the base, then smoothed and covered with Stockholm tar to prevent cracking and drying. It would appear that a good way to save rhino would be simply removing the horn then the problem is solved then rhinos should be worthless to poachers.

One third of all the reserves have dehorned their rhinos (excluding the Kruger National Park). Although poaching is made less profitable, the sad reality is that poachers will still kill for a horn stub due to its high value. Therefore we can sort this out by finding a way to cut the horn off completely without this procedure hurting the rhino. Horns grow back over time; recent studies show that the re-growth of dehorned rhino horn appears faster than growth in non-dehorned rhinos.

11. Ectoparasiticides:

Another way in which to save the rhinos is injecting poison (ectoparasiticides) into the horns of the rhino; this will not harm the rhino but the person who consumes the medicine later on. Ingesting the substance

may cause humans to have severe nausea, vomiting and convulsions, and other side effects. In addition to making a person very sick the ectoparasiticides contain a pink dye which airport scanner can detect. Conservationists are warning people as well as the poachers. The people are warned not to consume the horn due to the side effects. The poachers are being warned on fences outside parks and all over media campaigns.

12. Policy:

Save the rhinos has started a policy whereby an anti-poacher ranger may shoot a poacher if nothing can be done and if the poacher fires at the anti-poacher. However this is avoided at all costs. It would be much more beneficial if the poachers were caught and arrested, giving the opportunity to recover valuable information about who has commissioned them to turn to poaching, information about the supply chain, and smuggling routes. If a poacher fires then rangers may fire back, with the chance that lives may be lost in this exchange.

13. Poachers:

Rhino poachers are not always the ones to blame for the poaching of the rhinos. It could be the people they work for offering them money which influences poachers to poach. However the poachers are the ones who hack the rhino to pieces in order to kill the rhino. Poachers often enter through the Mozambiquean side of the kruger national park across the Carumane damn. There is a small poor village on the side of the damn, the village used to make its income through fishing but now through rowing the poachers across the damn at night. If we can convince the villagers poaching is bad we will

stop one way of transport and stop poachers from killing rhinos. One tactic known is that the poachers work in groups one group will shoot a gun on the opposite side to where the poachers have found a rhino. These poachers escape before security can arrive. The other group of poachers kill the rhino and flee with the horn. A possible solution could be split security forces one force goes to the site where the shot was fired and the others in a helicopter to “ the opposite side” of the park.

14. Summary:

To summarise what one can do for poaching is; legalising the horn trade while creating a national fund for increase in security, intelligence and awareness. Dehorning could save thousands of rhinos from dying because they will no longer have something to be killed for. Injecting chemical into the horn which will make people sick, the chemicals also contain a dye that airport scanners can detect. An anti-poacher may kill a poacher if threaten by a poacher and lastly villagers could be warned and maybe paid for turning in a poacher.

15. Conclusion:

It is almost clear that rhino horn don't serve any medicinal purpose whatsoever, but millions of people believe that it does. If people want to believe in prayer, acupuncture or voodoo as a cure for what affects them, there is no reason why they shouldn't, but if animals are being killed to offer cures that have been shown to be useless, then this is a very good reason to inhibit the use of rhino horn. All of the five species of rhinoceros are in danger to being hunted to extinction. It is tragic to realise that the world's

rhinos are becoming closer to extinction due to medications that probably don't work.