



WORLD YOUTH  
**RHINO**  
SUMMIT

**RESOLUTIONS  
/ OUTCOMES**



**WORLD YOUTH RHINO SUMMIT**  
21-23 September 2014 (incorporating World Rhino Day)

**Let our voices be heard**

## BACKGROUND

Youth ambassadors representing 20 nations attended the inaugural World Youth Rhino Summit in KwaZulu-Natal over World Rhino Day (21st – 23rd September 2014) hailed it a resounding success, and called for improved commitment to rooting out corruption, better use of funding and resources, more emphasis on education and awareness and greater political will to support the fight against rhino poaching and global wildlife crime, as they presented six hard-hitting Resolutions and a World Youth Wildlife Declaration to Deputy Minister of Environmental Affairs Barbara Thomson and global conservation icon Dr Ian Player.

In the weeks building up to the World Youth Rhino Summit, the delegates were provided with background information on the rhino poaching crisis and wildlife crime. Six 'Critical Issues' were selected as central to the problem and students were required to select one theme and do their own further background research.

### The themes were as follows:

1. Commercialization of Wildlife: trade, ecotourism and hunting
2. Demand reduction, culture and society: can demand for rhino products be reduced?
3. Wildlife Crime. Is this the World's New War?
4. The human tragedy - poverty and poaching are linked. Is there a way to address this tragedy?
5. Protected Areas, Preservation & Conservation.
6. Rhino Education & Awareness: what role can I play?



At the Summit, four academic Indabas equipped the delegates (Rhino Warriors), to become knowledgeable Ambassadors for Wildlife and provided the tools they would need to speak out against rhino poaching and wildlife crime in their own communities.



### These 4 Indabas included:

Indaba 1 – Setting the Scene: using role playing and mind-mapping, the global reach and impact of the rhino poaching crisis was put into context.

Indaba 2 – Debating the Issues: lively discussions and debates that lasted long into the night on the 6 Critical Issues formed the background to the Resolutions, which were written by the Rhino Warriors themselves. Key to this was that the Rhino Warriors came to their own conclusions, with minimal adult participation. This 9 hour process encouraged critical thinking and problem solving: students were encouraged to create new arguments and different approaches to the problems at hand; they were able to call on the knowledge of conservation elders and experts, who were on hand to answer their questions.

Indaba 3 – Voices of Protest: Rhino Warriors showcased their voices of protest through drama, dance, poetry, art and other forms of creative expression, further helping them to distil information that would become the Resolutions.

Indaba 4 – Formulating the Resolutions: This final Indaba summarised all the discussions and learnings of the Summit and resulted in the compilation of the 6 Resolutions, written by the delegates.

## RESOLUTION 1 - Commercialization of Wildlife: trade, ecotourism and hunting

We, the youth of South Africa, Mozambique, China, the UK, Netherlands, Germany, Vietnam, and Botswana are:

- Deeply disturbed by the exponential increase in rhino poaching,
- Alarmed by the lack of government involvement in the efforts to protect the rhino populations,
- Fully aware of the lack of education around the world with regards to the rhino-poaching problem prevalent in Southern Africa,
- Note with concern that a live rhino only has a legal value of \$23,000 while the illegal value of the horn alone is \$500,000,
- Acknowledge the urgency with which the issue needs to be addressed due to the rapidly approaching extinction of the rhinos

We believe that commercialization, especially the selling of the stockpiles is a short term solution, and the profits gained should be used in long term solutions such as education for the consumers.

We are convinced that through a systematic implementation of commercialization, the rhino could be preserved and more jobs can be created, therefore we:

1. Suggest that member states of the Commission for International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES) vote in favour of a proposal for the legalization of rhino horn at the convention in 2016 and urge the involved governments and CITES to prioritize the legislation that controls the trade.

2. Suggest the implementation of a future-sales market for live rhinos for the timeframe between the legalization and the finalization of the legislature. This will create immediate funds that will be used for the upgrading of security in game reserves as a direct response to the issue.

3. Further recommend the implementation of partnerships with consumer governments to enable the legal selling of stockpiles of rhino horn in order to satisfy the market demand in a time frame of minimally thirty years.

4. Proposes the implementation of rhino farming monitored by a committee consisting of members of various wildlife conservation stakeholders that will;

- a) Oversee legal trade
- b) Farming regulation
- c) Distribution of profits

6. Urge the governments of Southern Africa to prohibit trophy hunting of rhinos due to the fact that it diminishes the gene pool.

7. Encourage member states of CITES to regularly re-evaluate the situation and gradually shift from short-term solutions to long-term solutions such as education and demand reduction.

Proviso: This resolution supporting legalisation of rhino horn trade was arrived at by a very narrow margin, with a significant number of delegates disagreeing stating that the commercialization of rhino horn trade is unethical and unsustainable.

## RESOLUTION 2 - Demand reduction, culture and society

We the ambassadors of the World Youth Rhino Summit representing the countries of: South Africa, Sweden, New Zealand, Mozambique, Vietnam, Swaziland, Netherlands and the United States of America are appalled by the gruesome treatment of rhinos, by poachers.

We feel that they are being unnecessarily murdered as a result of myths and misconceptions as well as the demand for their horn as a status symbol in South East Asian culture. We the youth have found that we are:

- Astounded by the absurd connotations of importance through the ownership of rhino products,
- Alarmed by the lack of laws and legislations against committing wildlife crimes such as poaching rhinos and owning illegal animal products.
- Deeply concerned by the complicity of witnesses to the trade of rhino products in all countries affiliated with the illegal market.
- Shocked by the lack of awareness of the misconception of medicinal value of rhino horn.
- Concerned that the youth of today are not aware of the tremendous moral and ethical impact of poaching such as the cost of life, both of rhinos and humans, caused by the demand for rhino horns.

We the delegates feel that the necessary steps to reduce demand are the following:

1. Call upon a variety of highly respected figures from the main areas of consumption such as:

- a) Religious figures
- b) Sport idols
- c) Celebrities and
- d) Public figures

to publicly shame and renounce the consumption and trade of rhino products in the hopes of inspiring the public to join their campaign and put pressure on the government to establish legislations and laws denouncing and prohibiting rhino horn trade.

2. We believe that by offering incentives for information on the illegal rhino market in all countries involved in the trade, we could:

- a) Apprehend the higher level officials in the syndicates
- b) Deter buyers
- c) Reduce the amount of suppliers
- d) Decrease the demand.

3. Aim to create a petition in the hopes of raising awareness about rhino poaching and the trade of Rhino products, and furthermore encourage the South East Asian communities to stop their consumption of rhino based products.

4. We believe that varied education structures should be implemented according to different age groups by educating:

- a) young children, who are impressionable and encourage a mind-set which values wildlife on topics such as:
  - i. poaching
  - ii. the misconceptions of its medicinal value
  - iii. the importance of living rhinos
- b) teenagers, who when presented with information develop their own opinions, by teaching them the moral effects and ethical consequences of poaching and wildlife crime including the use of:
  - i. shock advertisements
  - ii. statistics
  - iii. human and rhino suffering

## RESOLUTION 3 - Global Wildlife Crime

We, the youth from South Africa, United States, Brazil, and Swaziland are deeply concerned by the multifaceted problem of wildlife poaching and the realization that our society's inertia might cause the extinction of rhinos prohibiting the next generation from seeing them.

We strongly believe that the majority of the aspects affecting rhino poaching can be attributed to the lack of government intervention, which has caused corruption, poverty, and lack of education. The rhino war is not a simple war; it is a complex war against poverty, ignorance, corruption and the misuse of government power.

The rampant corruption in the African and Asian governments is impeding the efforts put in place to preserve wildlife and prevent the illegal wildlife trade. We feel that the government expenditures are not being properly allocated, with not enough focus on the education and well-being of their citizens, causing widespread ignorance and poverty.

To reduce the corruption existing within the government and national parks we ask for the involvement of both the citizens and the influential officials in power to participate in the need for:

- a) better cooperation with international governments and the wildlife NGO's
- b) better application of foreign donor funds
- c) a commitment to cleaning up corruption and government incompetence in handling the poaching situation and
- d) the government money going to the designated public sectors

Moreover, we request the creation of a wildlife protection and trafficking act which would work similarly to the Drug Trafficking Act of 1993, where any persons will be prosecuted for a standard minimum number of years per offence if found:

- a) in possession of
- b) in distribution of or
- c) using of any endangered animal product

Any persons found aiding in any of the above offenses will also be trialed for a set minimum number of years per offense. Failure to disclose any information on the illegal trade of wildlife will also result in incarceration. Any connection found to any illegal distributors or buyers will result in an increase of sentence.



Firstly, in the war against ignorance, we must increase awareness and educational programs surrounding the park as they must see the importance of their wildlife and show them how they can profit from the parks. Furthermore, with education in general:

- a) people will have access to more job opportunities than before
- b) fewer would be willing to turn to poaching and
- c) it will improve the overall living standards of everyone.

Furthermore, we have to target countries where they consume rhino horn and create campaigns such as but not limited to:

- a) a television program that will be broadcast to teach people more about nature conservation and encourage them to play a larger role in the protection and prevention, with harsh Facts and jarring images
- b) using influential celebrities speaking out against the use of rhino horn to dissuade them from using rhino horn as it has no medicinal value, it's killing our animals and people are dying in the process



We believe that a leading cause of wildlife crimes occurring in Africa, as well as the rest of the world, is poverty. In impoverished communities, where people are desperate, there are numerous incentives to commit crime. Once communities are in a better position to sustain themselves, the need to poach would be unnecessary.

Therefore, involving the surrounding communities in the park would ensure their cooperation and show them the importance of the park. We encourage governments to instigate recruitment programs and training operations for the local communities near game reserves to become game rangers which would;

- a) increase the number of rangers protecting the animals
- b) deter people from becoming future poachers
- c) increase employment around the parks
- d) reduce poverty and
- e) increase the overall living standards and education of the citizens residing near the parks.

## RESOLUTION 4 - Addressing the links between poverty and poaching

We the youth from South Africa, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, are:

- Alarmed by the gravity of the Rhino poaching crisis
- Deeply concerned by the lack of a connection between the game reserves and the surrounding communities and the unemployment in these communities
- Recognize the lack of education concerning conservation
- Alarmed by inconsistent prosecution of poachers.

We believe that the following should be taken into account as possible solutions to this crisis:

1. Call upon game reserves to offer the impoverished communities surrounding them various opportunities such as;
  - a) skill development programs that lead to recognized qualifications, which will help them acquire sustainability,
  - b) work experience opportunities given to students of local schools
  - c) Subsidized visits to the parks for the students of schools in surrounding villages
  - d) job opportunities
2. Demand that the government's focus on community development is expanded to include the distribution of educational resources in the areas.
3. Commit to raising awareness of the human tragedy using social media particularly among the youth and request that parks endorse these awareness campaigns in the communities.

4. Request the improvement of international communication regarding wildlife crime by:

- a) Developing common global laws that are implemented equally in all countries
- b) Requesting the severity of criminal sentences be increased by:
  - i. Abolishing the option of bail,
  - ii. Charging the accused per criminal offense committed
  - iii. Increasing the penalties

5. Demand that the government improves the standard of living in the communities surrounding the reserves by:

- a) Establishing basic needs such as running water, sewerage systems and electricity.
- b) Establishing infrastructure such as hospitals, schools, and roads
- c) Supporting sustainable agricultural initiatives
- d) Initiating new job opportunities



## RESOLUTION 5 - Protected Areas, Preservation & Conservation.

We the youth delegates of Botswana, Brazil, Portugal, South Africa, Swaziland, United Kingdom, and the United States:

- Believe that game reserves are the primary locations that sustain rhinos in Africa and that they are of paramount importance as they protect our common heritage.
- Realize that if rhino poaching continues at the current rate, rhinos may become extinct.
- We are deeply disturbed by the light penalties given to poachers and their accomplices and believe that this contributes to the inefficiency of protected areas.
- We are further alarmed by the scarcity of rangers.
- We are concerned by the reduction of natural habitats.
- We have observed an absence of positive relations between game reserves and surrounding communities.

Therefore, we:

1. Urge governments to amend their laws to:
  - a) ensure penalties for wildlife crime as severe as those currently meted out for homicide
  - b) outlaw trophy hunting of any endangered or threatened species
  - c) eliminate bail
2. Suggest that our rhino be placed in highly protected areas to maximize security.

3. Draw attention to the scarcity of rangers and urge government support for:

- a) competitive salaries
  - b) protection
  - c) training
  - d) health support
3. Further propose an increase in appropriate advanced technology in the parks to monitor and pursue poachers.
  4. Call upon the government to redefine protected areas that include communities and are sustained by rigorous legislations.
  5. Urge the game reserves to reduce the resentment between them and the communities by:
    - a) increasing employment opportunities
    - b) improving standards of living
    - c) exposing the children to the parks, thereby increasing their appreciation for conservation and the rhino in particular.
- iii. the importance of living rhinos
  - b) teenagers, who when presented with information develop their own opinions, by teaching them the moral effects and ethical consequences of poaching and wildlife crime including the use of:
    - i. shock advertisements
    - ii. statistics
    - iii. human and rhino suffering

## RESOLUTION 6 - Rhino Education & Awareness

We, the youth of South Africa, Vietnam, Chile, Sweden, Mozambique, Switzerland, Portugal, New Zealand and Swaziland:

- Call for a dynamic international education campaign in Southern Africa and throughout the Far East.
- We are alarmed by ignorance prevailing throughout the world on the Wildlife crisis and therefore draw attention to three areas: Local schools education, local community education, educational programs for the end users
- We are convinced that this ignorance leads to the exacerbation of the situation of our rhino in particular.
- We are encouraged by the success that is evident of the implementation of community rhino ambassadors in the iMfolozi game reserve.
- We recognize the power of social media and celebrities.
- We are deeply disturbed by the fact that a curriculum on conservation does not exist in South African schools where we are about to be deprived of one of the iconic big five.

Therefore, we:

1. Express our hope that the ministry of education mandates the inclusion of a curriculum specifically written for wildlife conservation in all schools in South Africa. This curriculum would need to be developed for Kindergarten to Grade 12.
2. Recommend that the rhino ambassador model in iMfolozi be implemented at regional and governmental levels. This then would ensure job creation, which is one of the leading concerns in the increase in rhino poaching.
3. Further recommend that an intensified program is implemented in the education of the end users, concerning:
  - a) Misinformation on the medicinal values of rhino horn.
  - b) The human tragedy that goes with the inhumane slaughter of the world's rhinos.
4. Call upon the raising of awareness through multimedia and social media and the harnessing of the youth both in demand and supply countries
5. Soliciting the support of celebrities from consumer countries who can make an impact on the youth in particular.



### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

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