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Support Boots on the Ground

Due to limited resources, rangers are often put into the field with little to no follow-up support. But case studies of Asian rhino protection have shown that an increase in trained, properly equipped anti-poaching staff in the field leads to a reduction in poaching. Specific suggestions include:

- Share knowledge on paramilitary training
- Use technology (horn implants, night-vision goggles, fence alarms, surveillance cameras)
- Catalog DNA of remaining rhinos

How to Combat Rhino Poaching

At the Rhino Summit convened by AWF and Kenya Wildlife Service, attendees agreed that strong political will and coordination between countries, such as intelligence sharing, is necessary to reduce poaching and prevent the illegal trafficking of rhino horn. The Summit resulted in an action plan of other tactics that rhino stakeholders should take to more effectively combat rhino poaching, from the ground up:

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Increase Security and Law Enforcement

Given the potential for high reward and low risk—rhino horn is said to command more than US\$50,000 per kg on the black market, while laws related to wildlife offenses are still quite lenient in many African countries—rhino poaching and the illegal trafficking of rhino horn has become particularly attractive to organized crime syndicates. To combat this, the action plan suggests:



- Prosecuting rhino poaching and trafficking as organized crime, as South Africa is doing (such as with the “Groenewald gang” case)
- Maintaining comprehensive records of rhino horn stockpiles

3

Curb Demand

While suppressing the supply of illegal rhino horn is necessary (through the anti-poaching engagements discussed), Summit attendees noted that the other side of the supply–demand equation must be addressed:



- AWF recently partnered with WildAid on a public awareness campaign (see “Reaching Those with the Purchasing Power,)
- Studies should additionally be commissioned to better understand the drivers of the illegal horn trade

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Push Policy at the International Level

All of these efforts should be supported with expanded outreach to influence policy makers, financiers and government officials at the highest appropriate levels on the issue of rhino poaching and illegal horn trafficking.

