

Etat des lieux de la stratégie de lutte contre le braconnage des rhinocéros en Afrique du sud

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Diplôme : Master en médecine vétérinaire

Année académique : 2019-2020

URI/URL : <http://hdl.handle.net/2268.2/9591>

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Annexe 1 : Interview enregistrées

Director of operations GKEPF

Those questions are completely open and I invite you to answer freely to give me the more complete vision of GKEPF work and antipoaching issues. Don't hesitate to give me your personal opinion.

- Introduce yourself in a few words. What is your background? Studies? Formations?

Background is military where I served as an infantry officer for 25years. On leaving the army I left South Africa to undertake various austere environment project management roles in Europe, the Middle East and Africa. I returned to the RSA in 2017 to “retire” and have been here since...

- What do rhinos represent for you personally?

The rhino represents an iconic African species under threat of extinction. But also, no more important than the elephant, the pangolin, birds and reptiles, abalone, whales, sharks, indigenous trees, plants, etc. that are being illegally harvested to extinction purely for financial gain.

- How did you come to defend rhino's cause?

I was asked to assist, and thought that if you can somehow make a contribution, then you cannot stand and be a spectator.

“The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing”

- What is the story of the organization? What are the main purposes?

Greater Kruger Environmental Protection Foundation (GKEPF) was established in 2016/17 as an inter-dependent strategic alliance between WWF/PPF, KNP, Provincial and Private Reserve of the central Lowveld. With the purpose of assisting in combatting wildlife crime within the central Lowveld.

- What is the organizational structure of GKEPF?

As an “alliance” GKEPF is not a homogenous structure; rather a diverse group of stakeholders united by a shared common interest – the protection, preservation and welfare of vulnerable and threatened species.

- What is your function in GKEPF? When did you begin? Why?

GKEPF provides a platform for collaboration bringing together the efforts of stakeholders on a number of strategic interventions, primarily aimed at the protection of endangered wildlife species within central Lowveld including the portion of the Kruger National Park (known as the “join protection zone”) and the adjacent Greater Lebombo Conservancy in Mozambique.

- What is your daily routine?

We do whatever we can to contribute towards countering the poaching onslaught, by making it as difficult and as costly as possible for the poachers to do business. GKEPF focuses on developing the essential components of an effective counter poaching system:

- ✓ Reliable detection and early warning systems able to provide real time actionable information.
- ✓ The essential operational resources required to conduct effective counter poaching operations.
- ✓ Integrated reliable operational policies and procedures, communications, command and control platforms.

- What are the strategies actually used to fight against poaching? What differences between private reserves and the Kruger National Park?

They are fundamentally the same; in fact the collaborative relationship encourages interoperability and standardization between the role players.

- How do you federate all those different actions in different areas? How can they collaborate productively?

This collaboration has been going on for some time now as it started with the enlargement of the east/west open system incorporating 270,000ha RSA private rhino owning reserves; a 30,000ha provincial reserve and the Mozambique concessions into the central KNP. I believe it fair to say that much of the collaboration we see today started around law enforcement

challenges, so the relationships and trust elements have been developing over many years already.

Because of its diversity and the sheer geographical scale, the safety and security efforts within GKEPF area are, and will likely remain, decentralized with each reserve focusing its effort in its geographic area of responsibility and influence. This decentralized approach, also makes it possible for this to be coordinated by a very small full-time GKEPF Mission Support Centre Team, with direction being provided by a the GKEPF Board and its Executive Committee.

- In addition to the physical fight against poachers in the field, which is the first line of protection, do you use other solutions to prevent poaching? (Awareness campaign for potential future poachers or against corruption, working on the supply chain upstream...)

No, it's certainly not just about the fight; that is actually only buying time for other far more meaningful interventions:

- At home, we have to influence and manage a change from a conservation -centric mind- set to a community/regional development one that goes beyond the security considerations to all-inclusive ecological and socio-economic considerations (better land and water utilization and greater and community beneficiation, etc.)
- We also have to work changing the community-entitlement/ restoration mind-set to that of a mutually beneficial partnership.
- These are a huge trust building and multi-faced education tasks.

Then, looking abroad, the reality is that the plight of the rhinos will not be determined by Africans alone. The arrest of a few low-level poachers and seizing a few rhino horns will not stop this scourge. The responsibility to stop the onslaught rests on the shoulders of the world an especially the Asian countries.

- Who finance your organization?

Its members and some very loyal long-term donor partners to whom we are extremely grateful...

- How many people are involved in GKEPF? What is their background?

Many, across all layers of society and disciplines.

- What equipment do you have?

Other than for some key strategic assets and force multipliers we are not in the business of owning equipment, but rather in the business of capacitating others.

- What is the real impact of GKEPF? Do you have statistics about that?

Given the magnitude of the challenge, I'm not sure that it's tangible, or that a single intervention/organization can claim credit; I believe it's rather about the principal that the impact of the collective is far greater than the sum of the individual efforts.

- Finally, what is the most important aspect of anti-poaching fight for you?

Being inspired and humbled by my colleagues in green and their never give up attitude.

- What is your feeling about rhinos' situation? Optimistic? Pessimistic?

As the present custodians, we owe it to the next generation to remain positive and optimistic while we work at turning this tragic situation around.

- What do you think about the legalization of rhino horn trade?

It doesn't seem to be working, does it?

K9 manager of Southern African Wildlife College

- Introduce yourself in a few words. What is your actual activity? When did you begin?
What is your background?

I am the K9 manager of Southern African Wildlife College. We train dogs and handlers and all operational anti-poachers. I've been working here for 5 years. Before that, I've been my own business like breeding, training dogs. Dogs for personal protection, tracking dogs, detection dogs and shepherd dogs ... everything that working dogs.

- Actually you train dogs for antipoaching?

My own purpose is to track poachers and also to support the other dogs units. We use a free running pack of dogs to track down poachers. So we put like five or six dogs in a helicopter, the maximum that can be transported per flight, given their size. They have GPS collars on their neck. We put them on the tracks of the poachers and we let them working at their own speed and we follow them, flying over them. And once the dogs make contact with the poachers, we drop a tactical team to apprehend the poachers and then we go home!

They just lie down with the person, we don't let them bite the people. We can't control vicious dogs, especially five in a pack. If they get contact and bite the person, it's gonna take us too long to control dogs because we have to find the place and we have to run in and take four five dogs off the guy... we have proof that you can't control over the dogs. So when the dogs find out people, they just have to stay with the people. And we cover the dogs in the helicopter and make sure that they don't get hurt or whatever and that the poachers don't run away. Why we do that? A second helicopter with the tactical team land and aerial protection come and we do the arrest. Then we pull the dogs out.

- What is the point to use a pack? Do the dogs have different jobs, positive and negative in the pack?

The dogs can do it individually, you can only drop one dog and he will know what to do. But the point is that every dog has strong points and weaknesses. For example one dog is good in tracking; the other dog will be good at finding the tracks at the beginning; the other dog will bark because dogs communicate by barking, keep the pack together; one dog is fast; one dog little bit more aggressive and intimidating ... So every dog get good points and less good

points. And when you build your pack you need to make sure that they complement each other.

- How do you choose a dog?

We know what we want the dog doing as an adult and we just start repairing dogs from eight weeks old- six weeks old. Even actually the big thing we can start on three days old in certain program called “super dog program”. So from three we put more stress on the dog, just little thing like tilt it upside down for 3 seconds... And just by exposing them to that type of stress, the dog get used to handle stress better, the heart beat is stronger and it’s also proved that they are more resistant to diseases and those staff and they are quicker to learn. So you develop that and two weeks when eyes open and ears open, you start to accustom it to gunshots, at certain time you expose it to water. So they don’t have fears. All the educational foundation is like that.

Then, we don’t have to take it out of the litter. We just start training and we socialize him between people, airplanes, choppers, bush, animals, other scents... and we start training them to track. The better one we keep, the less good one we sell.

My job is to breed dogs for our self, to have pack dogs. So we always have new blood coming in our dogs, new dogs coming and gain experience. And if all the litter is good at training we keep all of them.

And then we can actually do some satellite unit. We based in Hoedspruit our college, but now it is Skukuza. We placed a handler with a pack of dogs at Skukuza, so they are much quicker to respond to a call from there. Then we do different satellite units.

When one of the dogs is not good enough, we can see if we can sell him. We don’t want to sell a dog, which is not fully efficient. If we don’t trust the dog, then are just gonna find him a good home and he can just be a pet. So some dogs are made to be pets, to lie at your feet and others to be working dogs. It’s all about personality, so you give to the dog that chance to show you what he’s got. I mean we only develop what is in DNA we can’t put something which is just not there. So if he’s got the DNA to track and fight for the track, you develop that. But if he doesn’t, you respect the dog for that and stop trying.

- How long does a dog career last?

It depend on the type of dog, I would say 8 to 10 years. It's quite dangerous because we are working between animals and predators and staff, so a lot can happen. We have got one dog 12 years old and he's still working.

- How long is the training before having an operational dog?

At least a year. So we start as a puppy like I described; from 8 weeks we let them run short tracks; from 6 months we start more intensive training and normally by a year they can be operational. Depending on how much people and dogs we have, we try to get each dog out for training every second day. Because we've got 50 dogs and only 5 people in the team. They are not used to one handler especially, they are free running so they don't depend on one person to track, they just want to track. Even for dogs working with harness and leash, it adds a value to the dog. I mean the dog is clever enough to be able to work with different people.

- Where are the dogs from? Do you breed the dogs here?

Yes, we have three litters that we breed ourself. When the college began we were given 22 dogs. So we selected them and we had 2-3 litters. It's not pure blood, all cross. Then, Texas got involved because Texas has a big hunt community there. They gave us 20 dogs. So that helped us a lot increasing our capacity. So we had one pack that we can track poachers with. We really had to pick tracks we gonna do. Because if the dogs run 20km in a day, they can't run tomorrow. But thanks to Texas, the number of successful raids went up quite high because we had more dogs to deploy.

- How effective it is?

We have stats I can't give you. But we are really effective...

- I suppose that it's a dangerous job for the dogs. What are the losses?

It's in a sense but they always a chopper over them, watching them all the time. If they are threatened by poachers or by animals, we'll be able to protect them. We lost one or two dogs to lions and hyena in the early days.

- What equipment do you have?

We have really important GPS collars that we use the Garmin100 with two receivers and receptors, so you can see what the dogs are doing. That's the most important technology. And obviously you must have a helicopter because it's the only way to keep up with the dogs. We mostly try to have two helicopters. One helicopter covers to the dogs and the other supplies to the front. At the moment when we make contact, they can come with air protection and arrest the guys.

- How much does it cost?

Free running pack dogs are a really expensive way to go. To give you an idea, a quick action in Kruger with two choppers and dogs. Only that is 100 000Rand, without counting people salary, vehicle, dog food, veterinary care, nothing...

- How do you finance all of this?

At the college, we have different sponsors: WWF, Peace parks... There are a lot of people involved. Yes this is really important. Without grants, we won't be able to do this. Look at dog food, Champion Feed gives us important dog food from Canada. That's like 90 000R a month, crazy expensive. We are blessed that a lot of people like and support the dogs.

- You make them wanting to be involved thanks to communication through social networks?

We got dedicated people working for the funding. This is not my job at all, so I don't know but that's how we talk to people, demonstrate and ask for funding. We spoke to a group this morning: when people see what you are doing, they are like astonished. And I've been talking about guys from the USA, they got connection to billionaires. And those guys are asking "how can I get involved with antipoaching in Africa?" "And now they've seen the dogs, they've spoken to us and saw the results.

We really need that and literally at this stage, we worked out all of GKEPF and we don't charge anybody. So if you work at GKEPF, you just call me and if the dogs are available we got tracks and we go. We don't charge the court outfit; we don't charge the chopper time, nothing we just go.

Nobody can work alone in this job. The rangers on the ground, they must find the tracks; then the dogs which is on the line, they must track that guy and they'll make contact; then they call us and we need air support; then we need the police to do the arrest and all the legal staff. So you can't work alone.

- You need the police to arrest somebody?

We can arrest them but then we have to hand-out to the police and they have to take the docket, the investigations...that staff.

- Do you work only for rhino antipoaching?

No... any tracks. It's almost 100% rhino poaching because this is the only track we find at this stage. The guys that use to do traps and staff like that, they don't go deep in a park and we know their modus operandi. So when we got that tracks, we don't deploy necessary, waist resources on that. Because if rhino tracking something happens, then we must have resources that resources that we can follow up on that location. So we can deploy resources in case of elephant poaching or lion bones that staff as well. Whenever you find a track on the ground, you actually are never sure if it's a rhino poacher or pitch poacher... and we have to follow up. So that's the blessing undisguised from rhino poaching, as sad as it is. It actually brings to deform all poaching problems. So now we have to follow every single track we find because you never know if that guy came here to find a rhino and even if that's not his intention, and he got a plan to poach fitch: "If I can poach fitch, I can just walk one kilometre further then I poach a rhino, and the income will be much more for me". So we have to have zero tolerance about poaching and do as much as we can there.

- How much units do you have?

At the college we have only one unit. We also put a satellite unit in Skukuza at the south of Kruger Park. And we are busy to put arrangement to put another satellite unit at the eastern Cape as well. So we'll have three.

- How much people working?

We haven't people yet for those satellite units. So for the entire unit, five at the stage. This satellite unit will be like two handlers and a kennel aid. So there will be like three people at

the satellite unit. They will maintain the training for those dogs. They will have like ten dogs and they will only be on standby.

- What is your personal feeling about the actual situation and perspectives for the future?

We're winning! Like I said it's a combination of things, it's not only pack dogs or only this... Everybody is working together and I think we make a difference. The poaching is definitely down. There could be different reasons for. But yes, we maintain a serious pressure on the poachers and we'll keep doing it, whatever happens to the end. We are all positive. You can't do this job and not be positive. We gonna do it, we gonna win this war.

- What is your opinion about rhino horn trade legalization?

They must open the trade and problems are solved. Because it gives a value to the animal and then we can actually farm those animals. We can sell that rhino horn and use this money to pay anti-poaching unit to protect that. And that means that there is a value to those animals and more guys will want to preserve those animals. That's conservation. At this stage, everybody want to sell the rhinos because the price for security is just too high and they couldn't get anybody interested to buy rhinos.

We don't have time. The black rhino in KwaZulu-Natal was saved because of opening the trade. There were 60 animals left and they opened the trade. So it's proven facts! I don't know why they still struggle, just to do exactly the same thing!

It's like professional hunting, exactly the same thing. I'm not a professional, I like hunting but I don't like to pick on animal. But it doesn't mean that I condemn it, you need that! Because if you go in Hoedspruit and you put all the hunting farms together is 4 000ha. Those 4000ha have an income of 6 000 Million Rand a year. So that's what wildlife compete with. There is no way that tourism in wildlife can bring that income. So if you're not gonna make money in wildlife, there is no value on having wildlife and we can close Kruger Park and plant lines of citrus trees. You can be emotional about it but that's the real life.

To be more extreme, what's the difference between a rhino horn and cattle? Why do we have cattle? Because we need to eat. Why do we have rhinos? If I have a farm and have a nice rhino, after a few time I can get use to that animal, I can put some food on the ground... Then I can send my children to university, without that rhino I can't do. So they must have an added value.

But unfortunately corruption is everywhere and makes it even more complicated...

Fixed-wing aircraft pilot

- Introduce yourself in a few words. What is your actual activity? When did you begin?
Why? What is your background?

I've been working for the Southern African Wildlife College for probably about ten years now. And we are involved in antipoaching... let's call it countered poaching operations in the Greater Kruger Park, so that's the central Kruger as well as the surrounding private nature reserves. We fly on fixed wing aircraft and we provide aerial support in countered poaching operations.

Obviously I'm a pilot but we're involved in protected area integrity, so we're looking after protected areas in addition to assist the greater Kruger with all the countered poaching operations, but from an aerial point of view.

My background, I've been a game ranger whole my life and a pilot, I've combined the two. So when I left school, I started flying and then I also studied conservation and I've combined the two. And I've been a warden of a reserve as well as a pilot. And now I'm doing full time flying in countered poaching operations.

- What do rhinos represent for you personally?

That's a passion. I wouldn't be doing what I'm doing if it wasn't to protect the species. So what I do is everyday I'm flying over the area and it makes a big difference. I'm passionate about what I do. Every rhino that we can save is a personal gain for myself.

- Are you a part of governmental action? Or an isolated private group?

We're independent; we work as a NPO (Non Profit Organization). It's completely donor founded and it's a private enterprise. We've got various key donors that help us with our project that keep these aircraft in the sky.

- Are there other groups like yours?

There are a few other groups like this one. But we are probably one of the most successful because we've been doing this for a long time and we've got a reputation and people trust us. We are probably the busiest countered poaching operation in the area. We're also working in

a very sensitive area, so every three months I've got to do a polygraph, integrity test. It's basically a liar-detected test because we're working with valuable sensitive information like rhinos. It's very very controlled. It's a directive from the conservation areas. To be able to work in those areas, you have to do this. Everyone does this test. You can imagine if I was on the other side I could give information to poachers and to people who could use this in the wrong way. And our operations are very transparent. We operate three aircraft and it's very regulated.

- Who federates all those small groups?

Yes, we are federated. Like today, we had a big antipoaching operation today. This morning we had two helicopters, one fixed wing aircraft, people on the ground, a dog unit. It's a huge operation. You must remember that in countered poaching operation it is not the one thing that's gonna solve it. You can have an aircraft, it's not gonna perform on his own. You need all those people, perfectly coordinated.

- What is your role as a pilot? (Functions, frequency of flight, reports...) How do you collaborate between plane and helicopter pilots? Do you have different functions?

They work together. The both need each other. Because the helicopter pilots have to stay very low down on the ground, working with people on the ground, they don't have the perspective that I have. So I'm a good eye over and I can see everything is going on. So I can be a platform because I have a much bigger scope.

- How many pilots are you here?

On this base, we are pretty much two, sometimes three pilots.

In all the organizations together, it depends... you've got the central Kruger and the greater Kruger, and you've got the surrounding private reserves. The private reserves, they have three different operations. Kruger Park got their own air wing, which I work with. So it's not a lot of airplanes. It's a very specialized kind of flying.

- Are there new pilots training?

Not really. You must remember that antipoaching flying is very advanced fly. It's not simply to get lesson and go to fly. It's a low level daytime, it's dangerous, it's risky. So you've got to

have the right kind of pilot, otherwise... You can't put a new pilot and say go and do antipoaching, it's not gonna work.

There are a lot of people who want to do this kind of flying, but they need experience before they can do it.

I teach people to fly but specifically for antipoaching. I can take somebody who wants to do this kind of flying and we'll teach them to fly from the very beginning. And then we do an advanced course. Then they can carry on and do antipoaching fly like Anton will do, but he's not graduate.

- What area do you cover?

I'm not really allowed to tell you but it's about half a million hectares.

He was showing me a map on the wall: That's just a quarter of the area that I do, you can put four of those together and then you've got full area, it's huge. To give you an idea, just that block here will take me three hours to fly.

- How often do you fly?

Everyday, but it depends... What we have is called "patrol flight". So if nothing is happening, we're gonna do a patrol in the area over one, two or three of these blocks. So every rhino that I see is loaded in the software program and then that gets put on to a specific program and then on Google earth and then that data on them get send to the warden or the section ranger of that area. Then he will know anyone data. That's his vulnerable area, that's where the rhinos are, that's where he needs to put a few rangers. So instead of putting men where we don't need them, he knows where there is a not concentration this is where he need to be focusing. So that's from "patrol flight", everyday we do that and then data get sent to the warden.

And then more and more we're getting called to what they call "reaction flight". It's an aerial reconnaissance, I mean in the air you can see if there is poachers or if there is a rhino carcass down. If there is a rhino carcass then we get an operation going with helicopters and dogs and staff... So that's "reaction flight".

And then we've got what we call "suppression flight". So if we've got a reaction, we know poachers are there and helicopters are on them and we're very close to them. If we know the poachers are maybe that way, I will go and oppress them. So then they can't move there

because there's an aircraft there. So you put them down in that area and give to people on the ground the time to move in and then to arrest them.

- Who decides to plan flying operations?

I do my own. But I work with people so obviously it's also very well managed. I work with others like people in the central Kruger, we are always in contact so we know what's going on and we can coordinate operations. So it's not just myself, it depends on what's happening on any day. If we have shots at night, we know that's there is possibly a carcass there, the poachers are still in the area. And then we know that the following morning we are gonna be requisitioned.

- What equipment do you have?

Aircraft! Yes obviously we have got some quite sophisticated software equipment that we fly with, that collects stats when we're flying; we have to localize what ever we see on certain program that can be download and then sent to the wardens. But otherwise you don't really need much equipment; it's GPS ... our aircraft are also bulletproofed because it's dangerous what we do. So it's really not a lot of equipment. I think equipment is in the head.

- When poachers are detected, how are you supposed to react? Call police?

The police only come last. We have authority to arrest; the section rangers and the rangers have this power. And then obviously the police will come after and then apprehend and take the people.

- What do poachers risk if they got arrested?

They risk not going home. We've arrested a lot of individuals and the sentences are becoming quite heavy. Unfortunately our judicial system is not great, so a lot of them get out on bail. We got poachers who were on bail and then we court again. It's just total corruption. And the court and the judicial system is just not that speed. Our biggest downfall was these two things: Probably the biggest threat that we have is the internal corruption, people involved assisting poachers especially rangers, not pilots. And then we getting information to poachers... It's difficult to trust your own people.

The second thing is the judicial system: when they will make arrest, the guns are not get proper, they'll not being convicted. So they're getting out. That's what corruption is. It's big. I mean there's so much involved in that whole thing.

- What are the statistics of penalty/ release?

I'm not sure but I know that the convictions are very low. The people are not getting put away for long. I think normally they should be in jail for about 15years. Some of them have even been as much as 20 to 25 years, but they always get out after then...

Most of our poachers in the area where I fly are from Mozambique so that's an illegal immigrant with an illegal weapon. And if he's sitting around, then it's an illegal activity. The syndicates supply the weapons. The way they do is that the syndicates have weapons; you pay a deposit for a weapon. If you bring it back, you get your money back; if you don't then you loose it. There are lots of people that do it. It's very easy for them.

- In addition to the physical fight against poachers in the field, which is the first line of protection, do you imagine other solutions to protect rhinos? (relocation, dehorning, awareness campaign for the potential future poachers...)

We do plenty of dehorning in all the private reserves. My job is to locate the animals from air and then the helicopter with the vet is coming and then they will do the dehorning. It's a very quick process.

It's very expensive. There are a lot of donors funding for that. Most of those private reserves are donators also. But the helicopter cost you between 5000ZAR and 6000ZAR per hour. The veterinarians are expensive also; I can't give you the cost over that. We've got an aircraft in the sky... So I think that the price is huge to dehorn one rhino.

I work through a NPO and I'm paid by them.

- Finally, what is the most important aspect of anti-poaching fight for you?

I think just to make an impact and to slow the whole pressure down which we've done. If we didn't put all those efforts and money and time in, we'll probably have not anymore rhinos left. But because of all the efforts of all the personal people involved, we slow the poaching pressure down. It's not ending it and it's not going to end it, but I think what has been done

has brought us more time. We still losing rhinos, we're still losing too many rhinos, but it slows the whole pressure down.

- **What is your feeling about rhinos' situation? Optimistic? Pessimistic?**

Yes I never want to be negative about this thing. I wouldn't do what I am doing if I didn't thing it was positive. And every rhino that I save is to me a huge motivation to keep doing it. And I've saved a lot of rhinos.

Also what we do is founding a lot of orphan calves when the mother has been shot and we saved a lot of those baby rhinos. When you see that and when you see those animals that have been saved, it makes a lot of effect.

- **What do you think about the legalization of rhino horn trade?**

It's one of the things we don't have to agree with it because I just feel that it will increase the demand. That's my own personal opinion. A lot of people say just found the rhino and just you know put it out there, I don't agree. I think it will just increase the demand for rhino horn. The market is big enough.

Helicopter pilot (green) / Game ranger (blue)

- What do rhinos represent for you personally?

It's an uncommon species. It becomes your passion...

- What is your role as a pilot, how do you collaborate with fixed wings?

Helicopters are quite expensive. So the fixed wings go up and look for the animals and then call us. We go up with the vets and dart. Normally we can have 3-4 animals together. Then we go to work on one of the animals and during this time, the fixed wing keeps an eye on the others. When we're finished, we can go straight to the other animal; we don't have to look for them. So it makes us saving a lot of time. Myself and my brother work pretty well together.

- What do you think about rhino horn trade legalization?

You're hitting a nerve, you know that? My viewpoint is very personal. I would definitely legalize it. And the reason why I'm saying that is because if you look at all the private rhino owners, they're sitting with big assets they could use. They could cut horns off and put that money into conservation and to looking after rhinos. Because now you're asking about the costs of rhino antipoaching for a year, it costs millions. People can't afford it anymore. If that rhino is worth it, because now the rhino worth nothing. **A rhino's worth more dead than alive.** If an animal is worth anything, then you could use that money to look after the animal. But now we can't. So, according to my personal viewpoint I would definitely go for it. If it was well managed, definitely I go for it.

Because I've worked with a lot of private rhino farmers. My brother works more with the Kruger National Park and national reserves.

I can give you example: on the north of Soutpansberg mountain, ten years ago, there were eight different farms of rhino; today, one there is left. The only reason why they sold all of the rhinos is because it was too risky and too expensive. So no one wants rhino anymore. I'm talking for the private rhino owners. If those guys were allowed to dehorn and sell the horn, they would all be able to afford antipoaching units, then they all would still have rhinos.

Too expensive and too risky, they come and shoot your rhinos; they come and shoot your family. There are still quite a few private reserves but a lot less than ten years ago.

- Do you know what is the impact of dehorning on rhinos' behaviour?

I don't, nobody knows. There are not enough studies, dehorning is still quite new. I think it might be an impact. In some areas there were a few animals that have been fighting and the horned rhino has damaged the dehorned one. But I saw the other day, I was flying in one of these reserves and a rhino without a horn was fighting with a horned one and he was beating the other. Because a dominating bull is a dominating bull, no matter if he's got a horn or not. I think it's too early to say...

They can't defend themselves and now they're gonna be dead rhino. So it's not an argument.

But that's the other argument: you meet get people very anti-dehorning because of tourism.

So when you wanna see a rhino with a horn or without a horn? Up to you.

You know when you do conservation, you must be logical...

When you come to conservation table, you must leave your emotions at the door and work on facts. That's extreme measurement we have to take. Dehorning at the moment is the only think we can do. Look at all animals that are getting poached, killed for a body part, the rhino is the lucky one because actually remove it without hurting the animal, what do people need. So the thing it's he's down for the moment, it could be saved tomorrow, depends on how we do.

I have a problem with conservation in general because rhinos are those big emotional animals. And then you have a look at animals like wild dogs, which are still shot by people, and nobody cares.

If you look at the elephants, people are raising front for elephants breaking out of Kruger all the time and it's costing, I can almost say millions to get these animals back. The population is exploding in Kruger Park. It's not the elephants' fault but that's what happens and we need to manage the number. Instead of spending money somewhere else and then trying to keep species back which keep on breaking out, which is too many actually for environment. There is no balance. And once again it's an emotional animal.

We can't relocate them. Think about this: you take 10-15 animals out of the Kruger and you put them into another reserve, you're just creating a problem in another place. Ten years later you'll get exactly the same problem that you have now in Kruger. Because those animals are gonna breed... What do you do with those animals?

We do a lot of contraception in elephants. It has been a quite interesting exercise. It seems to have worked but it's too hard to refine. Until they come for the once off, now you have to know exactly which animal you've done. You've got a herd of 30 animals, how do you know which one you've done, if you got once off for contraception? But then who knows how it can affect elephant behaviour?

I've heard somewhere that females need to have calves otherwise they can't have a family structure and that has been proven apparently already...

What we do with the lions, in a private reserve with maybe ten lions. We take the females with a contraceptive but they leave the ovaries in so they still can mate but she can't be pregnant. It seems to work because it didn't affect the family structure. But for elephants, you can't do this just practically, it's too expensive.

(...)

- Do you think that the trade legalization is gonna happen?

They will never open the trade. It's not gonna happen.

- What about the CITES? SA wants to leave CITES, do you think it's gonna happen?

Yes, Botswana is already out. South Africa is gonna follow as well, I'm sure. The problem with CITES is that EU makes decisions for us. This is our animals, they don't live here, and they can't understand I think Africa is getting a little bit pissed off with people that tell us what to do.

Annexe 2 : Résultats du sondage d'opinions à propos de la légalisation du commerce de la corne

Aircraft pilot	YES	<p>“I would definitely legalize it. And the reason is because if you look at all the private rhino owners, they’re setting with big assets they could use. They could cut horns off and put that money into conservation and to looking after rhinos. Because now you’re asking about the costs of rhino antipoaching for a year, it costs millions. People can’t afford it anymore. If that rhino is worth it, because now the rhino worth nothing. A rhino’s worth more dead than alive. If it was well managed, definitely I go for it.”</p> <p>“</p>
Helicopter pilot	NO	<p>“It’s one of the things we don’t have to agree with it because I just feel that it will increase the demand for rhino horn. The market is big enough.”</p>
Professional hunter	NO	<p>“A rhino without horn is not a rhino. Nobody wants to see it!”</p>
Owner of Mohloholo wildlife rehab centre	YES	<p>“There is no hope for future... We only can delay this inevitable end.”</p>
K9 ranger	NO	<p>“We are not supposed to trade with wild animals. It’s not going to work because of too much corruption.”</p>
		<p>“The problem is in private capacity. Private owners. It needs to be financially sustainable to keep rhinos. Otherwise it’s slowly but surely, you’re going nowhere...</p> <p>Moreover, that’s my personal opinion, it’ almost the biggest threat than poaching itself. Because now you’re loosing people, you’re loosing the</p>

Environmental manager of air force base	YES	<p>ability of the private sector that will protect them.</p> <p>A lot of the rhinos own to private people. If you don't give to these people the mandate the way to sell rhinos or sell horns or whatever, they'll not make any money... They don't wanna keep rhinos anymore and as a consequence, that land, that piece of land available for rhinos, is not available anymore. So we're losing habitat. You're losing also people with experience, expertise, capability and resources that's not able to keep rhinos.</p> <p>So we're losing resources : people, land, habitat... It's not destruction of habitat, but not available for rhinos. "</p>
Manager of Rhino revolution orphanage	NO	<p>"The officials don't have the means to control this official trade for now. Moreover, there will not be enough rhino horn to complete Asian demand. Thus it can't stop black market. "</p>
Vet nurse in Rhino Revolution	YES	
Director of operations GKEPF	NO	<p>"It doesn't seem to be working, does it?"</p>
K9 Manager in Southern African wildlife college	YES	<p>"They must open the trade and problems are solved. Because it gives a value to the animal and then we can actually farm those animals. We can sell that rhino horn and use this money to pay antipoaching unit to protect that. And that means that there is a value to those animals and more guys will want to preserve those animals. That's conservation. At this stage, everybody want to sell the rhinos because the price for security is just too high and they couldn't get anybody interested to buy rhinos. "</p>
Game ranger and conservancy pilot	NO	<p>« We don't have better solution for now. So let's try... »</p>

<p>Farmer Watch member</p>	<p>YES</p>	<p>« So if I am a private rhino owner, I need to make money somewhere otherwise, I'm not gonna keep those rhinos anymore. I'm not saying « sell the horn » but, you need to make money somewhere, with ecotourism, controlled trade...</p> <p>Let's just make a simple sum, let's imagine that you have only one bull and one cow and you're farming with, what it used to be on private land. You can sell one calve every 5 years, from those two animals. Let's say 200 000ZAR or 10 000 -12 000€, but it will cost you to keep that thing alive for 5 years, 10 Millions €. So it doesn't make sense »</p>
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