



Rhino Conservation & Tintswalo

DRY Wildlife Photography



To combat the unprecedented rhino poaching crisis in Southern Africa, Tintswalo Safari Lodge aims to raise awareness about the poaching epidemic and provide funding and support for a variety of urgently-needed anti-poaching interventions in the Manyeleti Game Reserve, Greater Kruger National Park and the South African Wildlife College (SAWC).

THE PROBLEM

The poaching crisis in Africa is driven by an ever-increasing demand for rhino horn. South Africa has by far the largest population of rhinos in the world and is an incredibly important country for rhino conservation. From 2007-2014 the country experienced an exponential rise in rhino poaching – a growth of over 9,000%. Most illegal activity occurs in Kruger National Park, a 19,485 km² of protected habitat on South Africa's north-eastern border with Mozambique. Kruger consistently suffered heavy poaching losses, and so in the last few years the government and international donors have channeled ever more funding and resources into securing the Park.

In 2016, figures show a dip in poaching in South Africa for the second year in a row, indicating that increased protection efforts are paying off. Although it is encouraging to see South Africa's poaching levels fall, the losses are still extremely high. A rise in incidents outside Kruger National Park also points to the growing sophistication of poaching gangs that are gaining a wider geographical coverage and – it would seem – expanding their operations across borders. Poaching syndicates are well-equipped, highly-organised and dangerous – they use helicopters, machine guns, veterinary immobilisation drugs and other sophisticated methods to stalk rhinos and kill them, taking their horn and selling the horn.



THE SOLUTION

In response to the dramatic increase in cases of rhino poaching, Tintswalo Safari Lodge has launched a multifaceted programme to strengthen rhino conservation efforts in the Manyeleti Game Reserve and the surrounding local communities. It has always been part of the Tintswalo's culture and a mission to engage and work with local communities by raising conservation and environmental awareness through educational campaigns, training workshops and participation in environmental and rhino campaigns run in the area. It is important to note that rhino-related matters are complex; there is no quick-fix to the current rate at which our rhino are being poached. For this reason, Tintswalo recognises the need to apply a long-term plan and work in a multilayered way to address rhino poaching systematically. Tintswalo Safari Lodge has developed a three-point strategic framework to address the issue and combat the threats to rhinos:

1. Creating awareness for the tourists and guests that visit the area and the lodge.
2. Educate and involve the local surrounding communities, specifically children, on the rhino poaching crisis and how they can help if they notice anything in their community.
3. Supporting the funding of anti-rhino poaching projects being run by the SAWC, which include the 'Eye in the Sky' Bathawk Programme, Wildlife Guardianship/Anti-Poaching Field Ranger Training and the K9 Anti-Poaching Project.

TINTSWALO SAFARI LODGE'S ANTI RHINO POACHING CAMPAIGN AIMS TO:

- Raise awareness among the international and national guests that visit the lodge, by presenting an informative visual presentation with the facts and figures on rhino poaching, and some ways that the guests can help. Each guest also has the option to donate to our cause on check out.
- In conjunction with the local communities in the region, private companies and government departments have joined forces to drive an educational awareness program, targeting the local surrounding communities on the borders of the Manyeleti Game Reserve. This joint venture is a combination of the following role players including The South African Police Service, Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency, Tintswalo Safari Lodge, Honeyguide Tented Camp and local communities and schools. The aim of this is to develop and educate the youth and communities to protect our natural resources by creating an understanding of the relationship between the game reserve, eco-tourism & lodges, our natural heritage, the community and jobs to have a sustainable future for all. So far this programme has reached roughly 800 pupils from the 19 communities surrounding the Manyeleti.
- To support the SAWC and the training it conducts to upgrade the skills of people within the conservation sector whilst also playing a vital role in the protection of Africa's biodiversity.

For more information on the conservation project call Alistair +27 15 793 9014

To make a donation towards Tintswalo's Rhino Conservation Project

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