

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES  
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA



Eighteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties  
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CITES COP18 – RHINO HORN TRADE PROTOCOL

1. This document has been submitted by Eswatini in relation to proposal CoP18 Prop. 8.\*
2. The Kingdom of Eswatini advocates for a highly disciplined, tightly controlled legal rhino horn trade protocol that is modelled on a system that operated successfully for over 50 years for other high value products. This has come to be known as “Smart Trade”. The structure for this would satisfy 3 basic essential requirements:
  - a) To limit the supply to levels sustainable for the population, while setting prices and conditions to maximize benefits to Nature conservation.
  - b) To establish a marketing channel, with the invited full oversight of the CITES Secretariat, that is clear and where no criminal horn can enter the legal market.
  - c) To incentivise Far Eastern governments to close-down the illegal trade and implement stringent destination-end controls.

**All this can be achieved by having a single source of supply:** a Broker (or Central Selling Organization – CSO), managed by professional traders, that would sell to a licenced cartel of retailers in the Far East.

- The Broker would be able to set prices to bring demand into line with sustainable levels of supply.
- The marketing channel would be clear and transparent once trade partners are identified.
- The cartel would be incentivised not to deal in illicit horn for fear of losing their profitable licenses.
- Transactions stand to be taxable by source and destination governments.

Eswatini would pioneer this trade with her limited and entirely controlled DNA certified supply. Eswatini’s impeccable and exemplary rhino conservation record and its small rhino population makes it a credible contender to pilot this trade model.

It is understood that the market for horn currently approximates 5,000 kg per annum and that Southern African range states could supply that quantity sustainably, provided that this trade is demonstrated to be beneficial to the conservation of the species.

**There would be no need to kill even one rhino in order to sustainably satisfy the currently known market.**

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\* *The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat (or the United Nations Environment Programme) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author.*

Given this “Smart Trade” the criminal trade would be faced with much lower volumes, much lower prices and much higher risks caused by legal competition.

In the case of Eswatini, this desperately needed money will be entirely committed to Nature conservation, with priority expenditure focussed on the needs of rhinos, incorporating appropriate rural community enhancement.

If unforeseen undesirable consequences occur to threaten rhinos, Eswatini is in a position to (and would) immediately terminate supply.

**Africa’s rhinos are in crisis. It is time to change from a failed ban to a “Smart Trade” – from illegal trade to legal trade.**

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