

http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/environment/flora-fauna/despite-poaching-south-africa-plans-for-rhino-horn-trade/articleshow/57607139.cms
News » Despite poaching, South Africa plans for rhino horn trade

Despite poaching, South Africa plans for rhino horn trade

AP | Updated: Mar 12, 2017, 06.47 PM IST

✉ 🖨 A- A+



In this Wednesday, March 8, 2017 photo, three rhinos line up at the Welgevonden Game Reserve in the Limpopo pr... Read More

JOHANNESBURG: South Africa's government is moving ahead with plans to allow a domestic trade and limited export of rhino horns, alarming many international conservationists who believe rhinos will be more vulnerable to poachers after a record slaughter in the past decade.

Draft regulations would allow a foreigner with permits to export "for personal purposes" a

maximum of two rhino horns. Critics argue that any exported horns would be hard to monitor and likely would end up on the commercial market, defying global agreements to protect threatened rhino populations.

Most of the world's rhinos live in South Africa. An international ban on trade in rhino horns has been in place since 1977, and South Africa imposed a moratorium on the domestic trade in 2009, when rhino poaching was accelerating to meet growing demand for horns in parts of Asia, especially Vietnam.

South Africa's government has lost court battles to preserve the 2009 ban, which was challenged by rhino breeders, and has leaned toward trade, backing a failed proposal by neighboring Swaziland at a U.N. wildlife conference in Johannesburg last year to legalize the international sale of rhino horn.

A 30-day period during which the public was invited to express opinions about the draft legislation on rhino horn trade ended Friday, the Department of Environmental Affairs said.

"The comments will be evaluated, the draft regulatory provisions will be revised based on the comments received, and the process for approval of the final legislation will be set in motion," the department said in an email to The Associated Press.

A foreigner who takes rhino horns out of the country must do so through O.R. Tambo International Airport in Johannesburg and cannot carry them in hand luggage, according to the draft provisions. They say authorized freight agents must provide authorities with DNA data and other information related to exported horns. Skeptics believe the system would be open to corruption.

Some consumers in Asia believe rhino horn in powder form can cure illnesses, although there is no evidence that the horn, made of the same substance as human fingernails, has any medicinal value.

Critics say legalization will spur poaching as illegally obtained horns are laundered into the legal market, similar to the exploitation of elephant ivory. Rhino breeders, however, believe poaching would be undercut by a regulated trade, which likely would allow the sale of horn stockpiles and the harvesting of horns from living rhinos.

The poaching is not confined to South Africa. This month, a 5-year-old white rhinoceros was shot three times in the head by poachers who broke into the Thoiry Zoo near Paris and used a chain saw to remove the rhino's horn.

"Banning the trade in horn has made the horn more and more and more valuable. Had we never banned it, the price of horn would never have got to where it is now," said John Hume, a rhino breeder in South Africa. "And that Parisian rhino would have been safe in its zoo because its horn would have been worth a fraction of what it is."

Hume described South Africa's draft legislation on the domestic rhino horn trade as "a step in the right direction."

But Allison Thomson, a South African campaigner against legalization, said putting rhino horns on the market would increase demand and that South Africa is sending "conflicting messages" about how to deal with poaching, jeopardizing its lucrative wildlife tourism.



WARNING: Highly addictive MMO game. Over 20 million
Vikings: Free Online Game



Hotel Prices You Just Can't Beat
tripsinsider.com

Recommended By Colombia

"The risk we run at the moment is that if we open up trade and poaching escalates we will have no rhinos in the wild. We will only have rhinos on farms, being farmed like cows," Thomson said.

Poachers killed 1,054 rhinos in South Africa last year, a 10 per cent drop from 2015, according to the government. While authorities attributed the decrease to increased security and other anti-poaching measures, some conservationists speculate that there are fewer rhinos to kill. Drought also killed some rhinos in the past year.

Top Comment

Sounds like another Mamata Banerjee - make money by hook or crook.

W B New

SEE ALL COMMENTS

ADD COMMENT

By some estimates, South Africa has nearly 20,000 rhinos, or 80 per cent of Africa's population. Asia has several rhino species, including two that are critically endangered.

Stay updated on the go with Times of India News App. Click [here](#) to download it for your device.



Follow / Like us at
@timesofindia



Most Popular

Punjab elections results: All you need to know



Uttarakhand elections results: All you need to know



Manipur elections results: All you need to know



Hotel Prices You Just Can't Beat



Ad: tripsinsider.com

PM Modi reaches BJP headquarters

After reaching BJP headquarters, Prime Minister Narendra Modi offered



Manipur: Villagers protest against Myanmar troops' intrusion at Indian border

Haolengphai villagers protested against the atrocities of Myanmar forces.



From around the Web

Best Flashlight Selling Like Crazy
Ubertorch



Republicans in Congress play Jenga with Obamacare
Reuters TV



Flight Prices You're Not Allowed to See
Save70.com



That's How You Find Super Cheap Flights!
Save 70



More From The Times of India

Student doing MPhil in JNU commits suicide
Times of India



MPhil student commits suicide in JNU
Times of India



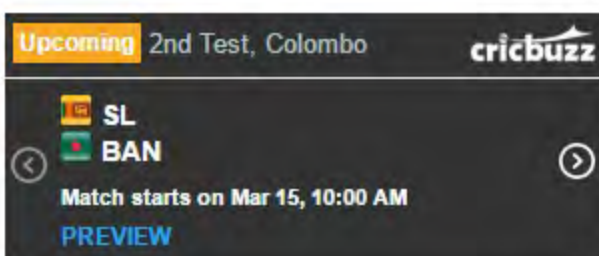
Birthday special: Aamir Khan's rare pictures
Times of India



Recommended by Colombia

Read More

[Welgevonden Game Reserve](#) | [Rhino Horn Trade](#) | [Rhino horn](#) | [international conservationists](#) | [export of rhino horns](#)



Wheel Loader

YUTONG® Since 1958

Military Quality For You

Start Trading

www.yutonghi.com