

Poaching rhinos in the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park. Wildlife smuggling and social protest.

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Rhinos poached*: Some figures.

2007: 13

2008: 83

2009: 122

2010: 333

2011: 448

2012: 668

2013: 1004 (e)

2014: 1215

Source: SANParks. *Most in the Kruger National Park.

Number of Rhinos in Africa: 25.000.

Hypothesis

- This growing poaching activity is related to social protest due the failure of the great expectations raised by the GLTP.
- For the time being I have no way to test the hypothesis. I'm presenting here the context that helped to consider this hypothesis.
- Two related processes: Sport hunting in SA; and the creation of the GLTP and its social consequences in Mozambique.

Conservation as business: Sport Hunting.

- Fees for sport hunting.
- Shift in the usual customers.
- Growing Asian demand of rhino horn.
- Rhino horn: from trophy to commodity.
- Ban on rhino internal trade in 2009.
- When the legal path is closed then the increasing demand turns to illegal ways: poaching. 1kg= 10,000 US\$.

Dawie Groenewald, safari operator:

"They [the Vietnamese] are not here to hunt. They are here to get the horn." (Rademeyer 2012: 102)

"Back then I was selling a rhino hunt for \$35 000. At that time you could buy a rhino for \$18 000. When the Vietnamese came in, all of a sudden they started paying \$8 000 a Kg. Rhino prices shot through the roof. Now that rhino would [cost] \$55 000". (Rademeyer 2012: 135).

The Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park

- South African Conservation Lobby reformulates the business: (Peace Parks Foundation).
- Regional Integration, tourism, employment, community management of natural resources; State-private sector-community partnership.
- Limpopo National Park. GLTP. Great expectations of an improvement for local population in both sides of the border. Democracy and Rights.

The Kruger Park before the GLTP.



A resident interviewed by Jessica Milgroom and Marja Spierenburg managed to express the feeling of being both forgotten and harassed:

"Whenever we report damage to our crops and the loss of our cattle to the people from the park nothing is done, but whenever we try to defend ourselves against the wild animals they are there within a minute to arrest us". (2008: 442).

People killed for allegedly poaching

2008:48

2009:62

2010:48

2011:71

2012:52

Source: Article by Simon Bloch in the *Sunday Tribune* (03-03-2013).

Data not officially confirmed by governments.

My lecture:

They came here talking about democracy. But democracy for who, for the animals or for the people? (“Elephants od democracy” by Jessica Milgroom).

They take our land, we take their rhinos.

Thanks.
Obrigado.