

► Indeed, a permit for the export of five of the animals, to Poland, was issued last year. The shipment never took place and the permit is no longer valid.

The CITES Secretariat states that the Roys are not able to afford to keep the Gorillas much longer, that they cannot be released to the wild and that there are no facilities for keeping them captive in Cameroon. It is therefore suggested that the animals go to an institution (or institutions) "within the framework of a well managed captive breeding programme" or to a suitably equipped facility within the natural range of the species.

This latter suggestion is favoured by many conservationists who are concerned to prevent the entry into commerce of the seven animals, and to preclude the possible stimulation of illicit trade that might result. If the Gorillas cannot be returned to the wild, an African holding or breeding facility could serve a valuable educational function for the local people who might normally view the creatures as a source of food.

Concern over commercial Gorilla trade is increasing. Japan's annual report to CITES for 1982 records imports of two Gorillas from Cameroon for scientific purposes and two from Spain, allegedly captive-bred in Guinea. More recently Granby Zoo, Canada, imported a very young animal from Benjamin Onana, a dealer in Cameroon, in January 1984.

*CITES Secretariat
International Primate Protection League
(23.2/1.3.84).
A.H. Harcourt (24.2.84)
Miami Herald (21.1.84)
Columbus Citizen Journal (15.2.84)
Monitor (9.3.84)*

Namibia Sells Ivory/Rhino Products

On 15 June 1983, the Department of Agriculture and Nature Conservation in South West Africa/Namibia, sold 99 kg of rhino horn by sealed tender. The rhino horn sold for R500 per kg in comparison to R376 per kilo fetched in 1982. Eight rhino feet sold for R8 each. A stock of 50 kg of rhino horn remains in the Department's possession.

In addition, about 1150 kg of ivory achieved an average of R56 per kilo - R10 more than the price obtained last year.

*Dept. of Agriculture and Nature Conservation
SWA/Namibia*

Natswa News, November 1983, No. 2

Cow Dung for Sale!

Fake rhino horns bearing a remarkable resemblance to the real thing are being produced in Southern Africa from resin, cow hair and cow dung. On at least two occasions in 1983, prospective rhino horn buyers in Zambia were offered fakes, totalling six. Reporting on this, the Save The Rhino Trust Newsletter (December 1983) remarks that the purchasers seized all the horn on both occasions and, in one case, the merchant! The prices asked were up to K150 (£64.00).

The Volume of the World's Trade in Rhino Horn

by Esmond Bradley Martin and Jonathan Barzdo

Since 1970 the world's population of rhinos has fallen by 70%, not only because of the increasing pressures of habitat disturbance but perhaps more particularly because of the pressures of trade.

From 1970 to 1979 the wholesale price of African rhino horn escalated from US\$30 to \$500 a kilo. In the same period the cost of Asian rhino horn soared from \$1 400 to \$8 000.

Asian rhino horn became so valuable because of its scarcity and an increased demand for it as a fever-reducing drug in South-East Asia which was experiencing an economic boom. However, the cost of African horn rocketed primarily because of a huge demand for it from a country which had hitherto consumed only small amounts.

An investigative study by Esmond Bradley Martin in 1978 showed that North Yemen had become the greatest consumer of rhino horn in the 1970s, importing approximately 40% of the world's total consumption, for the purpose of making dagger handles. In October 1983 he went to North Yemen again to up-date his study of the country's rhino horn demand. The information he gathered comes mainly from traders who deal in rhino horn.

Between 1973 and 1978 North Yemen imported an annual average of 3000 kilos of rhino horn, but that amount fell to a yearly average of about 1675 kilos from 1979 to 1982.

From 1972 to 1978 it appears that an average of approximately eight tonnes of rhino horn came onto the world market. For each of the years 1979 and 1980 however, the total was about four and a half tonnes.

In 1981 and 1982 this dropped to about two tonnes, and North Yemen's intake had increased to over 50% of what was available. Moreover, due to competition among buyers for the North Yemen sales, the wholesale price of African horn rose from \$500 in 1982 to \$700 in 1983. This 40% increase in just one year will put greater pressure on the estimated 13 000 Black Rhinos and 3100 White Rhinos remaining in Africa.

Below are the official import statistics for rhino horn into Japan, South Korea and Taiwan since 1979. A few comments on these are in order.

In August 1980 Japan ratified CITES and there have been no legal imports since then. The figures for South Korea are misleading because they represent only part of the picture. There were several hundred additional kilos coming into the country during each of the years shown, obtained by Korean smugglers who bought supplies from Hong Kong. Missing, of course, are official statistics from two major rhino horn consuming countries, North Yemen and mainland China; commercial imports there are now illegal. The world's total consumption of rhino horn can therefore only be estimated.

In the future it is extremely unlikely that eight tonnes of rhino horn will again reach the international market in any one year. There may not be enough rhinos left to supply such an amount. Indeed, unless the demands of rhino horn consumers are lowered and imports into North Yemen, China, South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore drastically cut, some populations of rhinos are likely to disappear altogether.