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Directing the wildlife **TRAFFIC**

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SOUTH AFRICA

TRAFFIC is working to ensure that the trade in South African wildlife is conducted sustainably.

Trade Records Analysis of Fauna and Flora in Commerce is the world's largest wildlife trade monitoring programme, with offices in most parts of the world. TRAFFIC is a programme of WWF and IUCN (The World Conservation Union). It works in close co-operation with the Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), which now covers some 34 000 species of plants and animals in more than 140 member countries.

Biting into the Toothfish trade

TRAFFIC is monitoring the extent of the international trade in Patagonian Toothfish. This species occurs around most southern Atlantic islands, including those which lie in South African territorial waters. The Toothfish is sought after for its culinary properties, and has been fished to commercial extinction in Chilean and Argentinean waters. A similar situation looks imminent in South African waters due to the activities of pirate fishing vessels.

Medicinals trade in the dock

The trade in animals and plants utilised for medicinal purposes

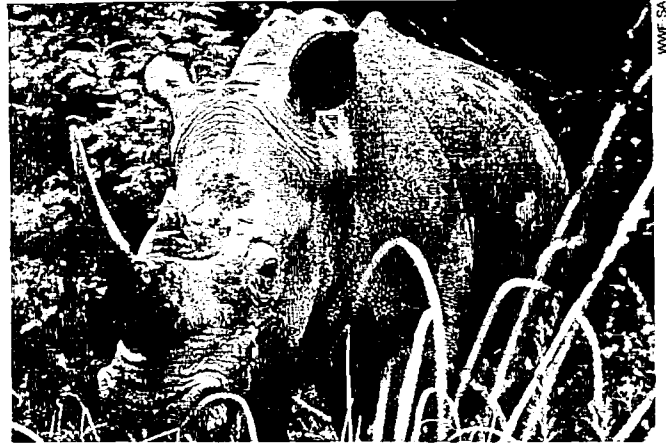


continues to be one of TRAFFIC's focal points. Investigations into the Asian trade in commodities such as rhino horn, tiger bones and bear gall bladders has led to a better understanding of this complex trade, the

impact on species survival and the important role which tradition and culture play in the utilisation of such medicines. TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa is preparing an overview of the medicinals trade in 17 African countries, including South Africa.

Viagra will not help the Rhinos

Media hype over the past few months has speculated that Viagra, the new drug being hailed as the "Sexual Holy Grail", could alleviate the demand for rhino horn as an aphrodisiac.



Although this drug may well help impotent men, TRAFFIC reports that it certainly will not help endangered rhinos. Research conducted over many years clearly proves that rhino horn is not prescribed in traditional Chinese medicine as an aphrodisiac. Instead, it is used to treat life-threatening fever and also delirium and convulsions. The myth that rhino horn is used as an aphrodisiac continues to hinder conservation efforts.

Inadequate control over succulent plants

TRAFFIC recently investigated the trade in 25 southern



African succulent plant families, totalling 5 128 species and subspecies. Of these, 2 227 were found advertised in plant catalogues and 1 158 appeared in South African export documents. The survey of nine countries revealed 874 plant species offered for sale without documented export

records from South Africa. The wildlife trade management deficiencies of government conservation agencies, parastatal organisations and private flora traders were also investigated.

For more information on TRAFFIC, or to order a copy of *South Africa's Trade in Southern African Succulent Plants* by David Newton and Justine Chan at R50 each, write to TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa, Private Bag X11, Parkview, 2122.