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Rhino

Andrew Hill's commentary on the African rhino (Forum, 7 June p 843) suggested to me a solution to their slaughter so obvious that there must be a very good reason for not applying it, and I'd be grateful to know what it is.

The solution: government game control teams would tranquillise every rhino they could find and remove their horns, simultaneously removing the poachers' incentive to kill. The process would continue, for years if necessary, until the irate but impotent customers for ground rhino horn became habituated to abstinence, or to testosterone, several generations of hornless rhinos being preferable to the rhino extinct.

How to finance the programme? It would be funded by government sale of the horn on the open market. This would provide the unique spectacle of a self-liquidating bureaucracy: as the supply of horn diminishes, so does the need for staff and the funds to support it.

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