

# The Strength of Will campaign

A ground-breaking campaign to change the behaviour of rhino horn consumers was launched on 22 September, World Rhino Day, in Hanoi. The Strength of Will campaign is based on the Vietnamese concept of 'Chi,' signifying the power within.

## TRAFFIC

Unlike conventional conservation messaging that focuses on the plight of endangered animals, the Chi campaign addresses the emotional motivators behind rhino horn consumption.

The concept, developed locally through market research and consumer focus groups, promotes the idea that success, masculinity and good luck flow from an individual's drive and internal strength of character rather than a piece of horn. 'The most charismatic and successful men create their own good fortune' is the essence of the campaign that is supported by an Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund grant awarded to Save the Rhino International, TRAFFIC and implementing partner PSI.

The campaign is set against the backdrop of intense poaching pressure on rhinos. The animals' horns are removed and trafficked to Asia to meet the demand there. In South Africa, home to 82% of Africa's rhinos, poaching has skyrocketed from just 13 animals in 2007 to 1,004 in 2013, and by 14 October this year 868 rhinos had been illegally killed, putting 2014 on course to be even worse than 2013. The recent rise in rhino poaching coincides with a rapid increase in purchasing power in Asian economies, with a concomitant trend towards conspicuous consumption of luxury goods, including rare wildlife products.

Campaign messages were developed, tested and refined with assistance from a focus group of existing or potential horn users. During testing one focus group participant noted, 'Since these concepts – power, charisma and luck – come from what I do myself, this campaign makes me feel good as a man.' The focus group participants also responded well to the Chi concept, explaining that it was 'extremely powerful' and 'very Vietnamese.'

The campaign therefore focuses on promoting the Chi concept and identifying and mentoring influential spokesmen within the business community and engaging with the private sector to create a culture of zero tolerance of wildlife consumption in business. Existing or potential consumers will also be engaged through social marketing and social media, and the campaign message will be disseminated through installations at high-end stores, golf clubs and similar venues, in print and online publications, digital media advertisements, mobile messaging, credit card and airline mileage statements and radio slots during morning drive time.

One of the campaign's first events took place in Ho Chi Minh City on 26 September at a large, influential gathering of business leaders, while Vietnam Airlines is all set to distribute campaign materials through its business check-in counters.

The campaign is currently set to run for two years, although additional funding is being sought to extend it further. Feedback from consumers and follow-up surveys will help to shape the direction of the campaign, which may be able to guide future consumer behaviour change activities. The success or otherwise of this and similar initiatives could be vital in securing the future for the world's rhinos. As one South African ranger recently remarked: 'The battle to save Africa's rhinos will be won or lost in Asia'.

## Grants

**We are extremely grateful to the Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund, which awarded £289,075 to Save the Rhino International. We are contributing a further £30,000 from our own core funds to this important demand reduction project.**



Central campaign poster reads 'Masculinity comes from within: A man's allure and charisma come from within, not a piece of horn'

In combination with greater enforcement measures and increased penalties against those convicted of criminal actions are moves to reduce the demand for horn in Asia that fuels the trafficking. The Chi campaign is based upon findings from qualitative and quantitative market research on rhino horn consumers conducted in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. The research identified a major consumer target group as wealthy businessmen aged 35 to 50, who view rhino horn as an effective way to rid the body of toxins and to enhance business relationships, while also serving as a symbol of good fortune.