

Auction for 13% of World's White Rhinos to Start at \$10 Million

- Platinum Rhino project owner John Hume is selling his ranch
- Ranch has 2,000 rhinos out of global population of 16,000



De-horned rhinos at John Hume's Rhino Ranch near Klerksdorp, South Africa.

Photographer: Mujahid Safodien/AFP/Getty Images

By Antony Sguazzin
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An auction for a ranch together with the world's biggest concentration of white rhinos will be held next month with a reserve price of \$10 million.

The cost, excluding the land, equipment and some other animals at the ranch, equates to about \$5,000 a rhino as there are around 2,000 of the endangered pachyderms at the Platinum Rhino project near Klerksdorp, southwest of Johannesburg in South Africa. One in every eight white rhinos globally lives on the ranch where owner, John Hume, has been breeding them.

The auction, which will start on April 26 and end on May 1, is “a unique opportunity to own the most significant population of southern white rhino in the world,” Platinum Rhino said on its website.

Hume's attempts to legalize the trade in rhino horns — that can be sawn off live rhinos and grow back — failed, rendering the project too costly to keep running. The trade is banned as its use in East Asia for alleged cancer cures and virility boosters has led to an illicit market that has caused rampant poaching.

South Africa is home to most of the world's white rhinos and some black rhinos. The country has been battling poachers for more than a decade and lost more than 1,000 of the animals to criminals every year from 2013 until 2017.

While South Africa's biggest national park is winning the war against rhino poachers, criminals have found softer targets in the country's east, where more than half of the 448 animals that were poached last year, were killed.

There are two subspecies of white rhino — the southern and the virtually extinct northern variety.

At Platinum Rhino the animals roam the ranch and are given additional food. There is also an orphanage to take care of rhino calves if they are sick or if their mother has died.

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