

Date: 1-14-13

1708

President Jacob Zuma
c/o One More Generation
P.O. Box 143627
Fayetteville, GA 30214



Dear President Zuma,

I am writing to encourage you to devote all possible resources towards combating Rhino poaching in your country. Rhinos are not only beautiful and majestic creatures, but also an important part of your country's economy. South Africa is home to the Big Five: the African Elephant, African Rhino, African Leopard, African Lion, and Cape Buffalo. While all of these species are at risk, Rhinos are even more so. On average, two rhinos are killed every day through illegal and cruel poaching.

Tourism accounts for a huge portion of South Africa's GDP, with more than 10 million foreign visitors each year. Most of these visitors come to see Africa's incredible wildlife, such as the Big Five, and unless you help put an end to poaching now, South Africa will be losing one of its most valuable natural resources.

Current international media coverage and outrage surrounding poaching shows foreign visitors a side of South Africa that is unstable, violent, and callous. Please show the world another side of your amazing country.

Here is a quote from Andrew Zaloumis chief executive at iSimangaliso Wetland Park, *"Destroying endangered species is an ecological and economic crime. Not only are rhino part of our collective national heritage, [but] the presence of wildlife is a vital resource for the country and region. In a region marked by poverty, tourism and conservation are the biggest employers on which families' survival and paying school fees depend."*

You have an amazing opportunity to show the world your true heart by instituting a few simple yet powerful changes, including:

- Instituting tougher punishment for poaching gangs.
- Increasing border security and checks for wildlife products being smuggled out of the country.
- Improving education throughout the country about the power and benefits of working with, rather than against, wildlife.
- Increasing funding for Rhino and other species protection nationwide.
- Increasing trade restrictions with countries that are knowingly supporting the eradication of Africa's irreplaceable animal resources.

Each of these changes will make an immediate and lasting difference and will allow these precious animals to thrive into the future, ensuring that your country, and the rest of the world, will be able to enjoy all South Africa has to offer for generations to come.

Thank you for listening to my pleas. We hope you will do the right thing for Africa, and for these animals as well.

Sincerely,

Signed: Lauren Melella
Printed Name: Lauren Melella

