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November 25, 2012

Dear President Zuma,

I am writing to encourage you devote all possible resources toward combating rhino poaching in South Africa. Although there are many species at risk in South Africa, rhinos are the most vulnerable right now.

Rhinos are poached for the supposed medicinal value of the horns. However, it has been proven that the horns do have these healing properties.

The South African ecosystem will suffer without the benefit of rhinos. They are an umbrella species that benefit the landscape and other animals. They help spread seeds and they have a symbiotic relationship with the oxpecker.

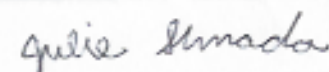
Losing rhinos and any other of the Big Five: the African Elephant, the African Lion, The African Leopard, the Cape Buffalo will also have an adverse effect on tourism in South Africa. Tourists flock to your country to see these animals in their natural habitat. They will not want to come if rhinos are gone.

I urge you to do the following:

- Instituting stronger punishment for poachers.
- Increase border security and check for wildlife products being smuggled out of the country.
- Implement trade restrictions with countries that knowingly support the eradication of rhinos.

Thank you for listening. We hope you do the right thing for these animals and Africa as well.

Sincerely,



Julie Shimada
Decatur, GA USA