

Stakeholders and African rhino conservation: A case study

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"Rhinos are a charismatic symbol of Africa's thriving wildlife," so says a team writing in the International Journal of Teaching and Case Studies, "but their future is threatened."

There is growing demand for rhino horn and thus increased poaching. The animals' plight is not helped by corruption and ineffective protection. Deirdre Dixon, Raymond Papp, Chanelle Cox, Melissa Walters, and Julia Pennington of the University of Tampa in Florida, U.S., point out that thousands of these magnificent beasts are killed simply for their horn every year. Botswana, Eswatini, and South Africa are at the forefront of the problem, but scant attention is paid to understanding the position and viewpoint of the local people.

In order to investigate the issues from an ethical stance, the team has conducted qualitative interviews with local ranchers, conservationists, and the [general population](#), and used analytical tools to extract meaning from their data. As they offer in the title of their paper the [ethical issues](#) are not "black and white".

The poachers are at odds with the rangers and conservationists, the locals are often at odds with the wildlife itself. The conservationists vehemently disagree with any rhino hunting and want to secure the future of the species. Others are less concerned with such matters and more concerned with their own life and livelihoods.

"Given the different stakeholder vantage points, it is difficult to find common ground and unanimously agree upon one solution for the rhino crisis. However, we can apply ethical frames to foster understanding of each stakeholder group and use these vantage points to explore a combination of solutions," the team writes.

The team offers a range of further discussion points and frames questions that might improve education and understanding in and around this sensitive subject.

More information: Deirdre Dixon et al, Ethical leadership is not black and white: a case study on stakeholders and African rhino conservation,

International Journal of Teaching and Case Studies (2021). [DOI: 10.1504/IJTCS.2021.116145](https://doi.org/10.1504/IJTCS.2021.116145)

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