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### **The EWT scoops Best Rhino Conservation Supporter of the Year Award**

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The Endangered Wildlife Trust's (EWT) Wildlife in Trade Programme was thrilled to win in the category of Best Rhino Conservation Supporter of the Year at the Rhino Conservation Awards in Johannesburg last night.

The EWT has a long track record of tackling rhino poaching issues, and first established a targeted Rhino Conservation Project in 2010. Mr Adam Pires, at the helm of the programme, does tremendous work in supporting the protection of rhinos in South Africa. Over the last 12 months, he and his team have together provided specialised skills and knowledge to over 1,000 officials who either work within rhino protected areas, or fight rhino crimes at other stages along the wildlife trade supply chain. The programme has also supported the uptake of specialised situational awareness software called Cmore, which is a "proudly South African" collaboration developed by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR). Cmore enhances the operational and tactical response of anti-poaching units covering more than 500,000 hectares of rhino habitat.

The EWT has deployed nine sniffer and tracker dogs that work with endangered species protection at strategic locations across the country. Here, they search vehicles and other property on a daily basis for rhino horn contraband, illegal firearms and ammunition. These dogs were some of the first to detect illegal rhino horn at OR Tambo International Airport some years back. Over 20 rhino protected area security managers have undergone analytical training with Adam. These managers are now empowered to analyse complex operational data to support strategic decisions when deploying anti-poaching units.

Adam and his team have created dedicated training interventions for members of various enforcement agencies to build capacity to combat offences committed against rhinos and other wildlife. Adam's team also works continuously to develop and produce many different types of awareness raising materials that target audiences as varied as members of the public, rhino reserve managers, and prosecutors. His team of experts has also commented in detail on proposed rhino horn trade regulations and they monitor legal proceedings against suspects involved in rhino horn trade.

A significant part of the work recognised in this award was supported through the United States: Department, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement, the Hans Hoheisen Charitable Trust, Relate Bracelets and the MyPlanet Rhino Fund.



#### *About the Rhino Conservation Awards*

Founders Dr Larry Hansen, and Miss Xiaoyang Yu, with sponsors Carl Zeiss Sports Optics in collaboration with the South African Department of Environmental Affairs and the Game Rangers Association of Africa, presented the Rhino Conservation Awards 2017 on 21 August, at a glittering gala dinner at Monte Casino in Johannesburg. This was the sixth year that these awards recognised significant role players involved in rhino conservation. These people are often involved in selfless and unrecognised work to save our natural heritage that is in danger of being lost forever.

*Photo: Hagen Maroney, Environment, Science, Technology, and Health Officer, U.S. Embassy, South Africa; Adam Pires, Wildlife in Trade Programme Manager, EWT; and Dr Harriet Davies-Mostert, Head of Conservation, EWT.*

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