



  
NATURE NEEDS MORE  
THE NEW WAY OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

The Evolution of Breaking The Brand to  
Nature Needs More  
August 2017

# **The Evolution of Breaking The Brand to Nature Needs More**

## **Summary Report, August 2017**

**Dr Lynn Johnson,**  
Founder, Breaking The Brand & Nature Needs More

This reported is dedicated to:

The men and women who have sacrificed their lives to protect the world's wildlife and natural environments.

To those who continue to do so and face danger, intimidation and threats from the people who want to exploit & plunder the natural world for personal, financial gain.

We will never be able to thank you enough for the commitment you have all made.

Contact Information:

**Lynn Johnson**

Founder, Breaking the Brand & Nature Needs More

[www.breakingthebrand.org](http://www.breakingthebrand.org) & [www.natureneedsmore.org](http://www.natureneedsmore.org)

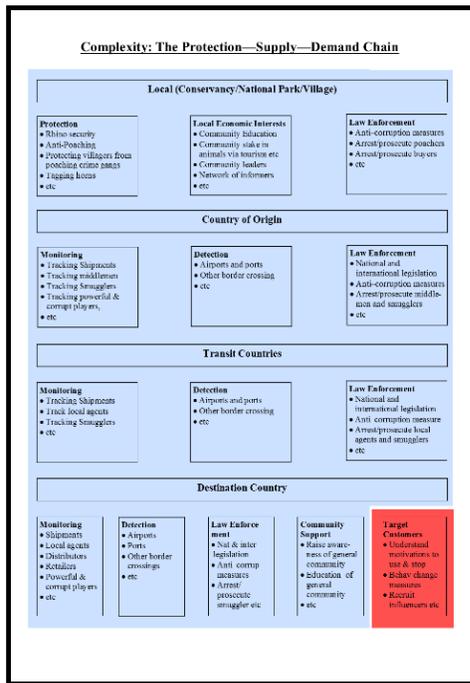
[lynn@natureneedsmore.org](mailto:lynn@natureneedsmore.org)

+61 418 124 660 (mobile)

Melbourne, Australia

# Introduction

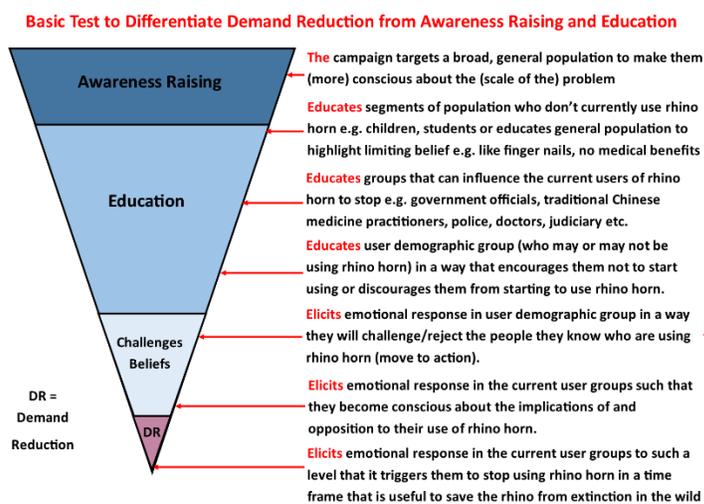
Breaking The Brand (BTB) was created in early 2013 ('Project Proposal - Breaking the Rhino Horn Brand in Viet Nam' <http://breakingthebrand.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Project-Proposal-Breaking-the-Rhino-Horn-Brand-in-Vietnam.pdf>) to help tackle the rapidly rising demand for rhino horn from Viet Nam and the resulting exponential rise in poaching of rhinos, mainly in South Africa but throughout range countries in Africa and Asia.



The aim of the project was to test and fill a gap in the overall conservation strategy, to gather detailed knowledge of the primary buyer/user motivations for wanting rhino horn and what might motivate them to stop buying. At the start of this project in 2013, this narrow, user focused, demand reduction type campaigning was seen to be a missing part of the overall strategy (highlighted by red box). It was never BTB's aim to create awareness-raising or education campaigns, as the conservation sector has been doing these successfully for many years.

Similarly, **BTB was only ever interested in researching the people who were buying 'genuine' rhino horn** as they are the only people who are relevant in designing the BTB campaigns. Our research has never targeted the people who couldn't afford genuine rhino horn or were likely to be buying 'fake' horn. Research from a 2012 TRAFFIC Report: ([http://www.trafficj.org/publication/12\\_The\\_SouthAfrica-VietNam\\_RhinoHorn\\_Trade\\_Nexus.pdf](http://www.trafficj.org/publication/12_The_SouthAfrica-VietNam_RhinoHorn_Trade_Nexus.pdf)) indicated that 90%

of what is sold as rhino horn in Viet Nam is fake.



Once BTB had clearly gathered this information, the aim was to create demand reduction campaigns that elicited a sufficiently high emotional response in the primary user groups that might trigger a change in purchasing behaviour.

These campaigns were created by linking ideas from behavioural economics, social psychology, behaviour change models and cultural anthropology to conservation outcomes. Only by understanding the effects of social,

cognitive and emotional factors on the economic decisions individuals make do we have the ability to influence and shape them; this is something the business and the advertising industry has been using for

years to trigger people to spend (Dec 2014: <http://breakingthebrand.org/by-harnessing-humans-reptilian-brain-we-have-a-chance-to-save-the-rhino/>).

By delivering a message in a currency that the buyer/users relate to, even if it does seem distasteful to us, we have the best chance of triggering a behaviour change in purchasing and lifestyle decisions.

Breaking The Brand was created explicitly as a Project – something that has a defined starting and end point – and not an organisation. It was anticipated that the need for Breaking The Brand would diminish as:

1. The large conservation agencies, with significant donor funding, learned how to produce genuine demand reduction campaigns rather than relying on awareness-raising and education campaigns in demand side countries and as a result,
2. The demand reduction campaigns created led to a reduction in poaching.

This meant **from the outset that BTB would not only create demand reduction campaigns, but also share our research and work openly** and engage with the broader conservation sector about how to design demand reduction campaigns; given their historical focus on awareness-raising and education, not demand reduction.

Over the last four years it became increasingly clear that, other than a small number of individuals in large conservation agencies and donor agencies, the willingness to learn in the sector is quite limited (February 2016: <http://breakingthebrand.org/how-much-is-spent-on-rhino-horn-demand-reduction-campaigns/> and September 2016: <http://breakingthebrand.org/it-is-time-for-large-conservation-donors-to-take-demand-reduction-seriously/>) and collaboration is largely non-existent (but constantly talked about).

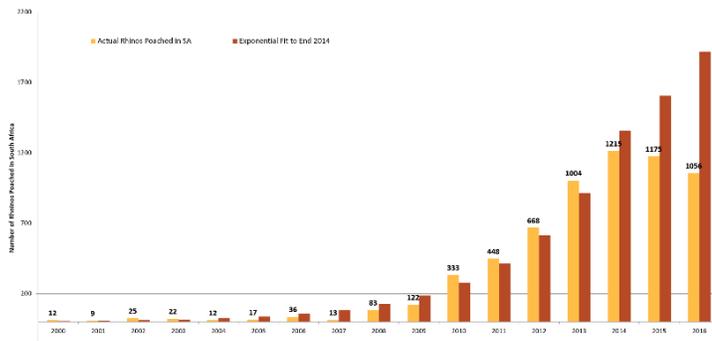
Most of this can be explained by the prevailing expert mentality of the people working in these organisations and a funding model which generally does not allow funds for professional development (April 2017: <http://breakingthebrand.org/want-to-know-why-conservation-is-failing-read-on/>)

While there has been some social validation of demand reduction strategies in large conservation and with donors, the lack of understanding of the comparative difference between demand reduction, awareness-raising and education is still great. For rhinos, this has implications in the **unnecessarily slow progress of reducing the demand which provides ammunition for the pro-trade lobby groups** (January 2015: <http://breakingthebrand.org/poor-quality-demand-reduction-campaigns-and-strategies-will-provide-ammunition-for-pro-trade-lobby-groups/>).

The image shows two screenshots. The top one is a document from the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), specifically the Seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Johannesburg (24 September – 5 October 2016). The document is titled 'Strategic matters' and 'Demand reduction' and focuses on 'DEMAND REDUCTION STRATEGIES TO COMBAT ILLEGAL TRADE IN CITES-LISTED SPECIES'. It includes a note: '1. This document has been submitted by the United States of America.' Below this, there is a reference to 'Compare points 16 & 17 with point 12 in USA submission to CoP17. : <https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/cop/17/WorkingDocs/E-CoP17-18-01.pdf>

The bottom screenshot is a social media post for 'Operation Game Change/WildFest'. The post features a collage of photos showing people participating in various activities, including a group photo, a person holding a sign, and a person riding a bicycle. The text of the post is partially visible, mentioning 'Operation Game Change/WildFest' and 'WildFest'.

However, it needs to be acknowledged that the combination of a massive investment in anti-poaching measures, better law enforcement and demand side country campaigns, including BTB campaigns, has led to a change in poaching levels. In South Africa rhino poaching is no longer rising exponentially and appears to have plateaued (at least for now). This is a huge turnaround from the situation 4 years ago, when the extinction of rhinos in the wild, within 6-8 years, was a real possibility.

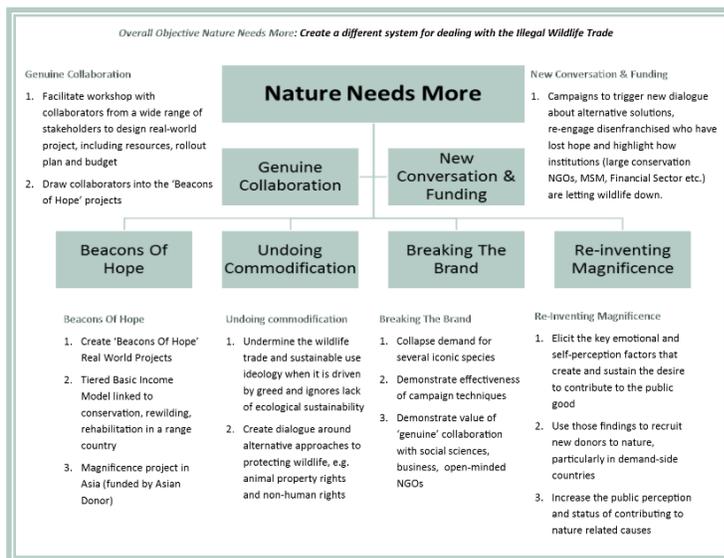


While there is understandable scepticism of the figures reported by the South African government, if you apply an exponential fit to the losses between 2001 and 2014, South Africa was heading toward 2000 rhinos being poached in 2016. Now the government can hide some losses to drought and natural causes, but it would be difficult to hide 1000 rhinos lost to poachers.

It is time to take stock and revisit the original purpose of creating BTB and what the next steps should be. This report outlines:

- The results BTB has achieved since the last report from May 2015
- More detailed observations of the sector and demand reduction initiatives
- Learnings about the supply-side and pro-trade lobby and the impact of the underlying ideology (free trade, neoliberalism, sustainable use) which underpins not just the funding of conservation agencies, but also the systems in place to ‘protect’ endangered species (like CITES, IUCN, WWF and the GEF etc).

The latter, the all-pervasive ideology of neoliberalism and free trade, has contributed to the decades of non-outcomes and failures from the conservation sector in tackling the illegal wildlife trade; this topic will be explored more fully in this report and the implications for our future focus and work.



It was this insight that informed the BTB team that working on demand reduction alone is not enough. We also need to **create an alternative model of conservation, which is NOT based on sustainable use and free trade.** We have decided to call this model and the associated non-profit organisation **Nature Needs More** (<http://natureneedsmore.org/>).

The aim of Nature Needs More is to provide an end-to-end alternative to the current ways to tackle the illegal wildlife trade, including:

- Continuing targeted demand reduction initiatives in destination countries, the primary focus still being the rhino.
- Researching how to re-direct the desire of consumers to a different relationship to nature, re-inventing Magnificence. In the first instance, the focus being consumers who buy wildlife products for luxury/status giving purposes.
- Designing and piloting a basic income model, linked to conservation outcomes, to support communities around high-value conservation areas.

The exact nature of the model and its components will evolve over time, but the underlying ideology is diametrically opposed to the free trade/sustainable use mantra that has brought so much damage to wildlife and the planet.

## Breaking The Brand

This section covers the results of Breaking The Brand (BTB) since the publication of the last report in April 2015: <http://breakingthebrand.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Breaking-The-Brand-Project-Second-Annual-Report.pdf> which summarised BTB's first 2 demand reduction campaigns in Viet Nam. These two campaigns focused on health anxiety, highlighting the horn infusion process that had been rolled out in South Africa:

**Pilot RhiNo campaign – Is it worth the risk?** launched 15th September 2014.

**Lunar New Year RhiNo Campaign: Will your luck run out?** Launched 16th January 2015

A total of AU\$58,000 was spent for these first two campaigns, in producing (purchasing images, photography) and publishing the first two campaigns; with over AU\$55,000 spent on publishing adverts in Vietnamese media. Commercial rates applied as publication was in premium magazines, which means that BTB is competing with local and international luxury brands for the advertising space. BTB paid commercial rates to ensure adverts were published in the section/location of the magazine where they would be seen by our target group; in speaking to NGO's who had negotiated pro-bono or reduced rates, they informed BTB that it had been detrimental to their campaign as they had been placed in a much less visible part of publications.

BTB still believes that exploiting the health anxiety associated with rhino horn infusion is the most effective and fastest strategy of achieving demand reduction for rhino horn in Viet Nam. While this process is being consistently undermined by any group supporting trade, BTB's response was to move to status anxiety campaigns as a way to reduce the demand in Viet Nam. **We still observe that health anxiety and status anxiety are the only two reasons the primary user groups would give up rhino horn in the short term.**

**RhiNo Campaign 3: What Does A Wildlife Criminal Look Like?** launched on the 4th January 2016.

Since starting our interviews, with the primary users of rhino horn in 2013, status anxiety – if using rhino horn would diminish the user's status in the eyes of their peers – was one of only two reasons given that would cause this group to stop using rhino horn. As with Breaking The Brand's two previous campaigns, over 85% of our adverts target businessmen, the remaining targeted affluent women; often the wives of the businessmen buyers/users.

The adverts asked: What does a wildlife criminal look like? and highlighted to people that if they had bought rhino horn recently it will most likely have come from an illegal killed rhino. **Triggering status**



Breaking The Brand of Rhino Horn in Viet Nam  
Second Annual Report (March 2014-April 2015)

**anxiety is not the same as triggering the fear of law enforcement; the users interviewed were not worried about prosecution as they felt they were above the law given their status in Viet Nam.** The approach taken in the adverts was to diminish the businessman’s reputation in the eyes of his peers and the networks of people he aspires to be a part of.

**Like all businessmen around the world, our target group is worried about the loss of their brand and reputation, and any resulting loss of career and business opportunities.** The advert also pointed to the fact that while in the past the focus had been on the poachers and traffickers of rhino horn, now more and more people are paying attention to the buyers. Given that the rhinos’ destruction is driven by the target groups desire to purchase rhino horn, the buyers must see themselves for what they are, wildlife criminals. The advert finishes with: *If you buy rhino horn, you are a wildlife criminal.*

**WHAT DOES A WILDLIFE CRIMINAL LOOK LIKE?**

Who do you see? A businessman cementing a deal or a man desperate to impress who has become the last link in an illegal chain?

Worldwide public opinion is becoming focused on the Vietnamese elite and asking: *Who are the real wildlife criminals?* If your reputation is damaged because you are known to use rhino horn, it may impact opportunities for you in the future.

Any recently bought rhino horn given as a business gift will almost certainly have come from a rhinoceros that was killed illegally. To date the focus has been on the poachers and criminal syndicates who traffic the horn. But now more and more people are scrutinising the buyers.

All this illegal activity and wildlife destruction is driven by the act of purchasing rhino horn. Together with poachers and traffickers, users of rhino horn must see themselves for what they are.

*If you buy rhino horn you are a wildlife criminal.*

**HOW DOES A WILDLIFE CRIMINAL LOOK LIKE?**

She is wealthy, she has family and she buys rhino horn. She buys it for son and aged parents to support their health, or for her husband to use as a gift in business.

Any recently bought rhino horn will almost certainly have come from a rhinoceros that was killed illegally. To date the focus has been on the poachers and criminal syndicates who traffic the horn. But now more and more people around the world are asking: *Who are the real wildlife criminals?*

All this illegal activity and wildlife destruction is driven by the act of purchasing rhino horn. Together with poachers and traffickers, users of rhino horn must see themselves for what they are.

*If you buy rhino horn you are a wildlife criminal.*

The adverts triggered additional donations, which meant a third advert could be tested as part of this campaign.

For the first time BTB was able to create editorial in Vietnam Investment Review, a weekly, English language magazine, targeted at business leaders, economists and senior government officials, circulation 40,000. In addition, we augmented the published campaign with a small letter writing campaign to 20 of the most influential businessmen in Viet Nam.



**RhiNo Campaign 4: The World is Watching** launched 4 July 2016

The timing, title and messaging of this campaign were developed to coincide with 2 key events related to the Illegal Wildlife Trade:

1. CITES Conferences of the Parties CoP17 in Johannesburg October 2016
2. 3<sup>rd</sup> International Wildlife Trade conference in Viet Nam November 2016

In addition, the Wildlife Justice Commission public hearing in The Hague in November 2016 also increased the global understanding of Viet Nam’s role in the current rhino killing spree.

With these 3 events and the increased mention of Viet Nam as a key user group in the global press, BTB felt it was time to point out to the users that they were no longer ‘flying under the radar’. Prior to 2014, most Western/English speaking MSM coverage was about China, TCM and aphrodisiacs, not Viet Nam and status symbols. In campaign 4, BTB solely focusing on the businessman user with 3 separate adverts.

**The Desperate Follower**

These are it: people among us who are driven to try to buy respect with rhino horn. Others are equally willing to accept. Has an unspoken desire for status, respect, recognition, self respect, from the global business community that more and more Vietnamese businessmen wish to be seen as?

At home and around the world there is a growing infatuation of the small percentage of Viet Nam's elite who are engaged global standards of wildlife protection to have their lust to consume.

Fortunately our true Vietnamese leaders consistently reject this self-serving practice and have moved into the era of international trade agreements. They are busy receiving awards from the 'Asia of SE Asia' to the world stage.

They will not do that here before passing your integrity with a rhino horn. The world is watching.

**RHINO**

If you buy, give or receive rhino horn you are a wildlife criminal.

The advert highlights that supposed leaders, who accept gifts of illegal rhino horn to shore up their status, are not real leaders; they are desperate, needy followers.

The behaviour is self-serving and speaks of weak people who are anxious to be seen as part of the elite.

**The True Leader**

It's time to decide if we're serious about joining the global business community.

The crude practice of trying to buy status and influence with rhino horn is despised by Viet Nam's aggressive leaders. It is seen as a self-serving sign of weakness, an illegal transaction that inspires resolution, not respect.

As Viet Nam joins the global trading community the reputation of our business elite is under scrutiny. Our counterparts around the world condemn the giving and receiving of rhino horn as a wildlife crime. Hence today's smart business people protect their corporate strategy and brand with their national pride and overseas.

As Buddhist teaching says, small gestures can result in great merit. Those of us self-leaders, the use of rhino horn as a bargaining chip, are not just protecting Viet Nam's reputation; they will be recognised as true international leaders. The world is watching.

**RHINO**

If you buy, give or receive rhino horn you are a wildlife criminal.

True leaders are above such cheap gestures and desperate attempts to buy status and influence. True leaders don't need of symbols of reassurance

True leaders are people who have gained the inner self-confidence and virtue to reject the aspirational consumption of their peers.

**The World is Watching**

You are looking at the last link in an illegal chain. A deal involving rhino horn brings disaster to all the participants and potential problems for their companies.

It is a deal considered by western managers, desperate to be seen to be part of the elite group, with the wrong idea of leadership, operating without principles. By flouting by disregarding global standards of wildlife protection they are running grave risks.

Everyone involved is vulnerable. The reputations of senior managers will be shattered when true Vietnamese business leaders learn of their disreputable actions.

International companies face a consumer backlash if reports of these practices are leaked and become public in their own countries.

The world is watching.

**RHINO**

If you buy, give or receive rhino horn you are a wildlife criminal.

In this image Vietnamese businessmen and a Western businessman are sharing rhino horn in the form of a ‘millionaire’s detox drink’ as a celebration to seal a business deal.

Both local and international businesses in Viet Nam are vulnerable if senior managers engage in these illegal practices.

More background on the design for this campaign can be seen via: <http://breakingthebrand.org/campaigns/>

BTB was able to publish 35 full-page adverts, over 16 weeks; the budget for this campaign was AU\$69,000. We added a new magazine: Forbes Vietnam, a monthly, Vietnamese language magazine, targeting government, businessmen, investors, circulation: 25,000.



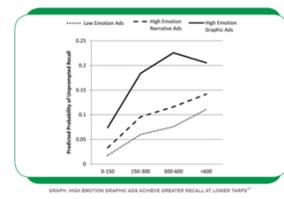
RhiNo Campaign 4: The World is Watching was the **first campaign BTB had published that reached the recommended number of target audience rating points (TARPs) to give a campaign the best chance of triggering a behaviour change in the target audience.**

During 2015 and 2016 BTB Founder Dr Lynn Johnson started to research the learnings from anti-tobacco, road safety and workplace safety campaigns including interviewing some of the researchers working in this field. Some of the learnings were covered in July 2015 blog: Discomfort Triggers Behaviour Change: <http://breakingthebrand.org/discomfort-triggers-behaviour-change/> and more recently December 2016 blog: Empirical Evidence Shows The Way: <http://breakingthebrand.org/empirical-evidence-shows-the-way/>

With the **insights provided from anti-tobacco, road safety and workplace safety, BTB developed an evaluation process, which can be seen via:** <http://breakingthebrand.org/how-to-evaluate-a-demand-reduction-campaign/> In rolling out campaign four, BTB had hoped to carry out both quantitative

**What Can We Learn From 40 Years of Anti-Smoking Adverts/Campaigns**  
Anti-smoking adverts have an excellent track record of achieving demand reduction for a substance that is addictive and used to have a high (glamorous) status in society.

- Research consistently shows that messages that evoke high negative emotion regarding the health effects of smoking are more effective than messages that are typically less emotionally evocative.
  - In the 7 new studies (reported in 8 papers) in which adult smokers rated a range of ads, negative health effects ads were perceived to be most effective
  - These messages have been found to work in exactly the same way in Asia as they do in the West
- Anti-industry messages have shown success though there has been limited use of these types of ads



- Getting the right level of campaign frequency or intensity while campaigns are on air is also crucial for optimising campaign investment.
- Studies suggest an average of at least 1200 Target Audience Rating Points (TARPs) per quarter, (for exposure of the entire adult population to around 12 anti-smoking ads over 3 months) is needed to change adult smoking behaviour

- Greater effects are observed as the intensity increases - probability of quitting and staying quit after about 1 year was 41% when not exposed to any anti-smoking ads, 52% when exposed to approximately 1100 TARPs per quarter, and 74% when exposed to over 3500 TARPs per quarter, after holding other potentially influential factors constant
- Emotionally intense (negative) messages require fewer TARPs to be recalled than those lower in emotional intensity. More cost effective and greater ROI.
- Airing intensely negative ads motivated more smokers to call Quit-lines who were less ready to quit or who had lower confidence in quitting.
- How-to-quit, positive or humorous ads were least likely to be perceived effective for motivating quitting.

**Quote from paper**  
"In sum, the most recent studies are consistent with the findings of recent past reviews that there is strong evidence for the use of highly emotive negative health effects messages to motivate changes in adult smoking behaviour and to reduce smoking initiation in adolescents."

**Quote from one of the world's most accomplished researchers on anti-smoking campaigns**  
"Negative messaging campaigns do the grunt work. Positive messaging campaigns make them palatable for the governments to fund."

surveys and qualitative interviews with the target group in Viet Nam. The interviews and the survey were designed to be invitation only to ensure that only the right demographic was targeted for evaluation purposes. **The right demographic in BTBs definition is the group of people who, should they choose to purchase rhino horn, can afford to purchase genuine rhino horn and are unlikely to be buying fake rhino horn.**

**It is critical to measures what is relevant and not simply do measurement for measurement sake,** something that is done far too much across all sectors including business, government and academia. One way the conservation sector is conducting surveys that are irrelevant is interviewing and surveying people who don't have the financial means of purchasing illegal wildlife products. For example, a recent survey of supposed consumers of rhino horn in Viet Nam surveyed people whose average salary was less than US\$300 per month. This makes no sense when the price of rhino horn is quoted at greater than US\$65,000 per kg.

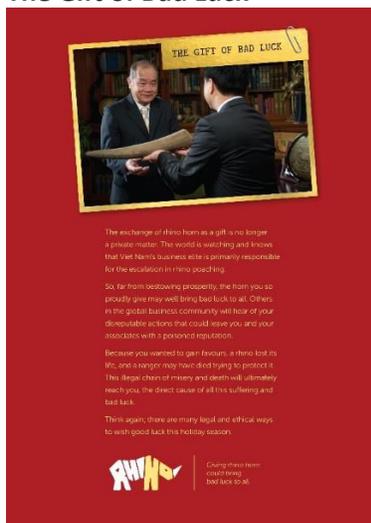
Unfortunately, BTB could not get sufficient support from members of the target group to conduct the evaluation for RhiNO campaign 4. We are planning to do an evaluation at the end of Campaign 6.

### **RhiNo Campaign 5: The Gift Of Bad Luck (targeted letter writing campaign for Lunar New Year)**

As a volunteer organisation, BTB did not have the capacity to raise funds for the 2016/2017 Lunar New Year period, but we wanted to do something at this important time period. The Lunar New Year (Tet) is the most important public holiday in Viet Nam. There is a superstition that how well things go in the preparation for the holiday and over the 3-day celebration will impact personal and professional success in the year ahead, particularly in relation to health, prosperity and happiness.

Rhino horn use spikes during Tet. It is given as a gift to gain favours with managers and business contacts in the weeks leading up to the holiday and use in the so called 'millionaire's detox drink' increases markedly due to the nature of the celebrations. **As a result, BTB created an advert and a targeted letter which was sent, by mail, to 40 of the most influential businessmen in Viet Nam.**

#### **The Gift of Bad Luck**



#### **Reputation Letter Pack**



the letter and the pack:  
<http://breakingthebrand.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Reputation-Letter-LNY-2017-Pack.pdf>

More background on the design for this campaign can be seen via Jan 2017 Blog: Honesty is a very expensive gift. Don't expect it from cheap people <http://breakingthebrand.org/honesty-is-a-very-expensive-gift-dont-expect-it-from-cheap-people/>

### RhiNo Campaign 6: Think: Is Rhino Horn Putting Your Reputation At Risk?

With campaign 6, BTB wanted to build on the status anxiety message associated with losing business reputation and brand, as a result of using rhino horn to try to seal business deals.

Even though the poaching figures are still tragically high, the fact that rhino poaching is not growing exponentially anymore may mean that at least some Vietnamese businessmen may have lost their interest in rhino horn. As interest may be waning, the risks of continued use could start to outweigh the (status) benefits.

BTB adverts warn those who continue to consume that this may now have a negative impact on their business brands, reputations and opportunities; see last paragraph of the advert: **Be warned; your reliance on rhino horn may be your undoing. As business opportunities start to dry up you will come to realise that you are being rejected. Your weakness and desire to impress is poisoning your business brand and your reputation**



ARE YOU GIVING AWAY YOUR REPUTATION.

Your use of rhino horn is no longer invisible. Over the last 12 months the world has learnt who the key buyers are and no longer tolerates those few Vietnamese who use it to buy status and favours.

They see men with fragile egos who have to buy influence with rhino horn because they cannot seal a deal on merit.

So if you continue to use rhino horn your business reputation is likely to crash. It's not only global opinion leaders but also forward-looking local businessmen who see the use of rhino horn as a sign of weakness and commercial incompetence.

Be warned; your reliance on rhino horn may be your undoing. As business opportunities start to dry up you will come to realise that you are being rejected. Your weakness and desire to impress is poisoning your business brand and your reputation.



Think: is rhino horn putting your reputation at risk?



THE DRINK THAT POISONS YOUR REPUTATION.

Your use of rhino horn is no longer invisible. Over the last 12 months the world has learnt who the key buyers are and no longer tolerates those few Vietnamese who use it to buy status and favours.

They see men with fragile egos who have to buy influence with rhino horn because they cannot seal a deal on merit.

So if you continue to use rhino horn your business reputation is likely to crash. It's not only global opinion leaders but also forward-looking local businessmen who see the use of rhino horn as a sign of weakness and commercial incompetence.

Be warned; your reliance on rhino horn may be your undoing. As business opportunities start to dry up you will come to realise that you are being rejected. Your weakness and desire to impress is poisoning your business brand and your reputation.



Think: is rhino horn putting your reputation at risk?

For this campaign, BTB has been able to raise AU\$120,00 making it our biggest campaign ever. Launched on 7<sup>th</sup> August 2017, the adverts will run continually until March 2018, in all the magazines used in earlier campaign.



An additional magazine is being tested for this campaign. This weekly, Vietnamese language magazine is more geared towards enterprise owners and the trade economy; circulation: 70,000.

Over the 2017/2018 Lunar New Year period the print advert used will be the one created for RhiNo campaign 5: The Gift Of Bad Luck, created for the targeted letter writing campaign.

BTB hopes that we can find support to carry out both quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, with the target group in Viet Nam, in February/March 2018 as the campaign is coming to an end. We would welcome hearing from any person or organisation who can help linking us to the relevant target group (please contact [lynn@breakingthebrand.org](mailto:lynn@breakingthebrand.org)).

The one initiative that BTB is disappointed it wasn't able to bring to fruition in this time frame is the campaign outlined in October 2014 blog **Giving Up Rhino Horn To Be Accepted Into A Higher Status Group**: <http://breakingthebrand.org/giving-up-rhino-horn-to-be-accepted-into-a-higher-status-group/> as BTB believes this type of campaign would be very effective with the elite males driving the current rhino killing spree.

Breaking The Brand couldn't have achieved any of this without our wonderful supporters: <http://breakingthebrand.org/supporters/> many of whom have committed funds to several campaigns. We can't thank you enough for your belief in the BTB approach to reducing the demand for rhino horn in Viet Nam.





even debated, on several occasions, about withdrawing from social media completely and close down our accounts. People cannot understand this complex issue if they are only prepared to get the information about the problem from a few lines in Facebook and Twitter. We were considering if our social media presence would just add to the ‘noise’ created on social media, distracting people from understanding the complexity of the illegal trade in rhino horn.

BTB maintains its social media profile primarily to point people to new blogs, our focus is to engage with the several hundred people on our subscriber list.

### Breaking The Brand In The Media

BTB campaign covered in BBC wildlife Magazine October 2016

**THE OTHER SIDE OF RHINO CONSERVATION**  
 SAVING RHINOS FROM EXTINCTION REQUIRES PEOPLE TO STOP BUYING THEIR HORNS. BUT THE SCIENCE OF DEMAND REDUCTION IS A COMPLEX BUSINESS. REPORTS JAMES FAIR.

**DEMAND REDUCTION STRATEGIES**  
 Breaking The Brand wants to make the buying, giving or receiving of rhino horns culturally unacceptable. In Vietnam, the 'red rhino' campaign (left) is a softer message that only highlights the fact that rhino horn has no medicinal properties.

**PROJECT OUR REPUTATION**  
 The rhino horn trade is a multi-billion dollar industry. It's a complex business that involves a network of people, from poachers to middlemen to buyers. Breaking The Brand is a campaign that aims to change this network by making the buying and selling of rhino horns socially unacceptable.

**AGENDA ANALYSIS**  
 Rhino horn is often sold in small, unidentifiable pieces. These are either sold to the public or to the wealthy elite. Rhino horn is often sold in small, unidentifiable pieces. These are either sold to the public or to the wealthy elite.

**SOME USERS TOLD US THAT EVEN PICTURES OF DEAD RHINOS WERE LIKELY TO INSPIRE PEOPLE TO USE HORNS.**

TRT World News



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8r9HKWN2pvg>

Freedom of Species



[http://audio.3cr.org.au/3cr/freedom-of-species/2016/08/21/1300/201608211300\\_freedom-of-species\\_64.mp3](http://audio.3cr.org.au/3cr/freedom-of-species/2016/08/21/1300/201608211300_freedom-of-species_64.mp3)

The Wire



[http://de9znd9hicg5y.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/24075543/The-Wire-Thursday-24-August-2017web\\_01.mp3](http://de9znd9hicg5y.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/24075543/The-Wire-Thursday-24-August-2017web_01.mp3)

For more information on BTB media: <http://breakingthebrand.org/media/>

## Further Learnings From 4 Years of BTB

Since launching BTB in March 2013 the founder, Lynn Johnson, has engaged with individuals at a number of large and specialised conservation agencies working on the illegal wildlife trade and in demand side countries. While for many BTB is still seen as just another ‘armchair conservationist’ group, a small number of good relationships have been built with individuals interested in the experience and expertise in behaviour change BTB can offer. Many of these same individuals acknowledge the sector knows very little about demand reduction in comparison to education and awareness raising, in which the large conservation agencies have a great deal of experience.

Over the 4 years, there have been numerous opportunities to talk to and work with people, mainly informally, to help with combating the illegal wildlife trade. BTB has also been invited to participate and present at workshops and conferences. This section summarises the key insights and learnings of BTB’s Founder, Lynn Johnson, from this engagement, and the implications for dealing with demand and the desire to trade in wildlife products.

### **Learning 1: The core expertise of too many agencies is fundraising and projects to keep their large donors (mainly governments, but also private) happy**

Through observing patterns of behaviour over 4 years and through gaining insider information about what is/isn’t possible within the large agencies, this is the only logical conclusion. Even contemplating to run campaigns that may upset ‘a’ donor is out of the question for most of these agencies, as keeping the money flowing appears to have priority over achieving actual outcomes. BTB has been told on many occasions over the year that running campaigns that are true demand reduction campaigns and which use fear/anxiety (such as proven to work in anti-smoking and road safety ads) is out of the question because it may ‘upset donors’. Let’s look at just two examples

**Example 1:** In March 2017 when presenting BTBs approach at a USAid conference (**Innovations in Counter Wildlife Trafficking Conference**) one question from the audience, a representative from a large agency working in demand side countries was:

Agency: “What do you do when a donor will only give money for a campaign that they feel comfortable with, but isn’t really a demand reduction campaign”.

BTB: “Does the donor want to fund a demand reduction campaign, education or awareness-raising.”

Agency: “They want to say they are funding demand reduction.”

BTB: “You show them the difference between three potential adverts (demand reduction vs. awareness raising/education). If they still want to fund the awareness raising/education advert, then you can say that’s ok, but know it is not demand reduction and will not have the desired effect of slowing poaching quickly and that they can’t represent themselves as funding demand reduction, because they are not.”

Agency: “What do you do if they want to give you money still, but for what is an awareness-raising/education campaign that they still want to represent as demand reduction”

BTB: “Then you have to have the courage to walk away from the donation”

The response was nervous laughter from the audience.

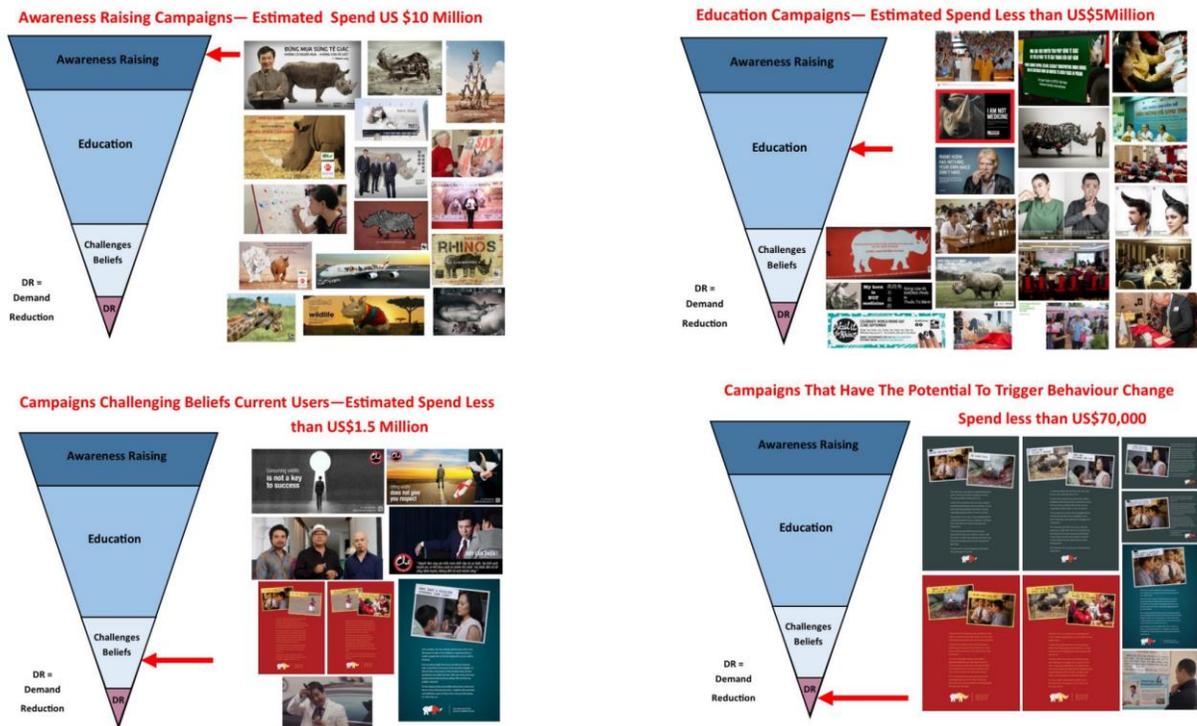
Example 2: Email from another agency in the same lines:

Agency: “There is a lot of talk about demand reduction and yet the majority of funding still goes towards awareness raising. School kids and students always seem to be the obvious groups. I personally think this is just as much about educating the funders as it is the organisations, **I can’t tell you how many people come to me and they want to fund education of school kids.** What can you do!”

BTB response was on the same lines as example 1. **BTB has never and will never let donor ‘values’ or sensitivities dictate the themes of our campaigns.** Yes, we have donors who are uncomfortable with our messages, but they have been educated as to why we are taking this approach. For BTB, our campaigns are about getting results, not about protecting donor sensitivities and as a result pretending that more is being done to target key rhino horn user groups than is truly the case.

More information about this issue can be found in several blogs including:

- How Much Is Spent On Rhino Horn Demand Reduction Campaigns? (February 2016): <http://breakingthebrand.org/how-much-is-spent-on-rhino-horn-demand-reduction-campaigns/>



- Reflections Leading in to CoP17 (September 2016): <http://breakingthebrand.org/reflections-leading-in-to-cop17/>

## Learning 2: The large conservation agencies want to believe that only positive messages trigger behaviour change

This point is related to the previous one and may just be a rationalisation of the underlying fear to upset donors. As a group, pretty much all the agencies BTB has been in contact with, subscribe to a model of

human behaviour change that implies the users of illegal wildlife products must ‘be helped’ to aim for ‘higher values’ and hence renounce their previous use.

Partly this is a misunderstanding of some of the behaviour change research. Much of the current research comes from the health sector, for example:

- To ensure that people who have found a lump go to have cancer screening tests, programs use positive (not scary) messaging. Makes perfect sense for the target group as you don’t want to scare them away from doing the test.
- To encourage people into a new behaviour, such as brushing their teeth, make it positive and fun. Again, makes sense for the target group, make it engaging and a positive behaviour to adopt.

These positive messaging models have become pervasive. This is of course an over-generalisation and discounts the fact that people can equally change their behaviour as a result of fear, which companies and advertising has been using for years, in everything from antibacterial handwash to anti-tobacco campaigns.

More information about this can be found in several blogs, including:

- Discomfort Triggers Behaviour Change (July 2015): <http://breakingthebrand.org/discomfort-triggers-behaviour-change/>
- Empirical Evidence Shows The Way (November 2016) <http://breakingthebrand.org/empirical-evidence-shows-the-way/>
- By Harnessing A Human’s Reptilian Brain We Have A Chance To Save The Rhino (December 2014): <http://breakingthebrand.org/by-harnessing-humans-reptilian-brain-we-have-a-chance-to-save-the-rhino/>



### **Learning 3: Donors have a limited understanding of demand reduction and prefer not to ‘rock the boat’**

Again, related to point 1 & 2, whilst there has been a considerable increase in funding for demand reduction campaigns from both government donors (such as USAid) and private donors, there appears to be a lack of willingness to educate themselves around what demand reduction actually means and what type of campaigns have been successful in other contexts based on the type of users and their motivations to consume.

There is much that can be learnt from anti-smoking and road safety campaigns that can be applied to the illegal wildlife consumption. Because of the lack of cross-sector engagement and the narrow, academic view prevalent in the conservation sector, there has been very limited engagement with social sciences. This equally applies to donors and a good example that highlights the lack of donor

understanding is in one of the submissions, from the USA, to CoP 17:

<https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/cop/17/WorkingDocs/E-CoP17-18-01.pdf>

Firstly, take a look at point 17, which states:

- As called for in the UNGA resolution, **demand-reduction campaigns should be well-targeted, species specific and country-specific**, as demand for the same species even in countries with similar cultural backgrounds can be different. Demand for elephant ivory and rhino horn is a good example; speculation can be a key driver in one country, but not necessarily in a neighboring country. **Campaigns should prioritize and target those consumer groups that have the most significant influence on illegal trade.**

Then go back to point 12:

- The United States Embassy in Viet Nam, in partnership with the Government of Viet Nam, the Government of South Africa, and civil society, **launched Operation Game Change, a demand reduction campaign** that included a series of public outreach events focused especially on reducing consumption of rhino horn.

Operation Game Change is NOT a demand reduction campaign by Breaking The Brand's criteria, but it is NOT a demand reduction campaign based on their own criteria from point 17. Here is a link to Operation Game Change: [https://www.facebook.com/operationgamechange/photos\\_stream](https://www.facebook.com/operationgamechange/photos_stream)



You can see from the images, this is not a demand reduction campaign. It targets young people, meaning it does NOT target those consumer groups that have the most influence on the illegal trade.

While awareness-raising campaigns and education campaigns are valid strategies, and they will ensure that any behaviour change becomes a sustainable change as a result of educating the next generation, they should not be confused with the types of

targeted demand reduction campaigns that are currently required.

A consequence of this is that the conservation organisations that have been spending quite substantial amounts on campaigns aiming to reduce interest in rhino horn now have got to explain to donors why so much money has yielded little result. Undoubtedly the go to explanation for this lack of progress will be the behaviour change is complex and slow.

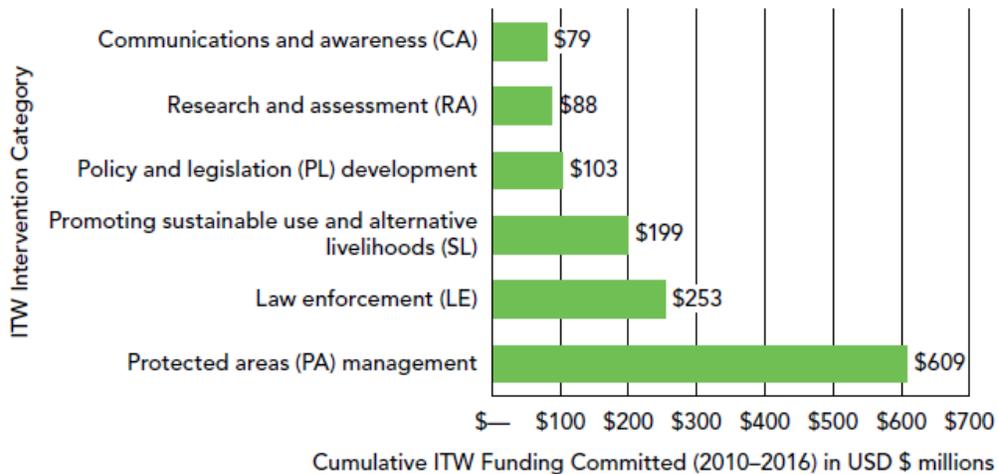
It certainly doesn't have to be, particularly since the primary target group in Viet Nam, from a behaviour change perspective, is close to an ideal scenario. The primary motivation to consume is clear – it is to gain status in the eyes of their peers. In addition, the user group is small, homogenous, concentrated in just two cities and can be reached via print media. More information about this can be found in:

- It Is Time For Large Conservation & Donors To Take Demand Reduction Seriously (September 2016): <http://breakingthebrand.org/it-is-time-for-large-conservation-donors-to-take-demand-reduction-seriously/>

**Learning 4: Demand reduction receives very little funding and most of what it does get is not even spent on ‘genuine’ demand reduction campaigns**

Most of the money spent on reducing the poaching of rhinos (and elephants) goes to protection measures on the ground in range countries. A detailed report by the World Bank Group “ANALYSIS OF INTERNATIONAL FUNDING TO TACKLE ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE” (<http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/695451479221164739/pdf/110267-WP-Illegal-Wildlife-Trade-OUO-9.pdf>) finds that the vast majority of the USD \$1.3bn spent between 2010 and 2016 went to protection and law enforcement and only 6% went to communication and awareness, which includes demand reduction campaigns:

**FIGURE 10. Cumulative IWT Commitment Amounts by Intervention Category, 2010–2016**



Most of this money flows from governments (through the Global Environment Facility, the GEF: <https://www.thegef.org/>) to governments (of the recipient countries).

What this does mean is that money allocated to demand reduction may disappear as quickly as it appeared, unless the major recipient agencies (such as IFAW, WildAid, TRAFFIC, HIS etc) can demonstrate that their campaigns can trigger the required consumer behaviour change. This is not likely when awareness raising or education campaigns are sold as ‘demand reduction’.

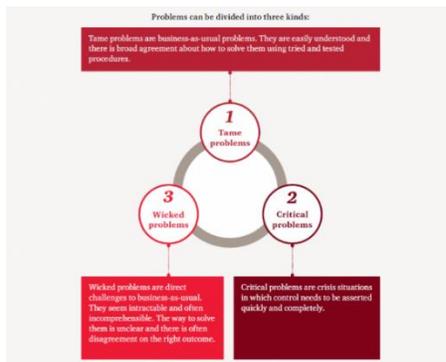
**Learning 5: Lack of strategic thinking in the large conservation sector, almost 100% of their work is either tactical or academic**

A further observation of the agencies working on the illegal wildlife trade is that most of the thinking and work is either tactical, brand related or academic. There is a distinct lack of strategic thinking, which is crucial to solve a complex problem of this scale; the illegal wildlife trade is estimated to be worth \$20bn annually. In addition, while there is funding made available for research, publications and attending international meetings and conferences, there is a lack of professional development for employees. As a result, from a wildlife trade perspective, there is not the prerequisite expertise to respond to:

1. The changing nature of luxury consumption (which has had a major impact on wildlife) as a result of the rapid economic growth in SE Asia and China since the 1980s
2. Evolving political agendas and the dominance of a neoliberal, free trade mindset since the 1980s and which plays a critical role in funding.

At the same time, the large agencies understand quite clearly that future funding is more dependent on brand perception than producing outcomes. Hence the current model of academic research, tactical project work and brand building is working from a fundraising perspective. The agencies can use the academic research to promote using an ‘evidence based’ approach, even if what they do in practice does not follow the research prescriptions.

Further, by sticking to a scientific basis almost exclusively around ecology and biology, they can continue to ignore the fact that conservation is 90% about people – human behaviour, sociology, economics and politics. This narrow focus on biology, ecology and protected areas means that they don’t have to tackle the really difficult questions that will shape the future of wildlife on the planet – human population growth, exponential economic growth and the commoditisation of nature.



This lack of strategic ability is nicely covered in the PwC publication (<http://www.pwc.co.uk/services/human-resource-services/human-resource-consulting/under-your-nose-ten-ways-to-identify-and-retain-transformation-leaders.html>), where they highlight that problems can be divided into 3 kinds: Tame, Critical and Wicked. Many of the problems that leaders face that require transformational change in their organisations can be classified as ‘wicked problems’. BTB certainly believes that many of the problems facing the conservation sector can be classified as ‘wicked’. We need leaders with strategic intuition, who

recognise (covert) agendas and deal with them surgically. These same people need to be able to influence stakeholders to tackle priorities, no matter how difficult, not symptoms.

More information on this can be found in:

- Want To Know Why Conservation Is Failing? Read On... (April 2017): <http://breakingthebrand.org/want-to-know-why-conservation-is-failing-read-on/>
- Conservation vs. Wildlife Traffickers. Who do you think will win the war in wildlife crime?! (March 2015): <http://breakingthebrand.org/conservation-vs-wildlife-traffickers-who-do-you-think-will-win-the-war-in-wildlife-crime/>
- The Elephant In The Room (August 2017): <http://breakingthebrand.org/the-elephant-in-the-room/>



given its echo chamber approach?” (January 2017): <http://breakingthebrand.org/is-mainstream-media-contributing-to-the-rhinos-demise/>

## The Desire to Supply Drives Demand

With a complex issue such as legalising the trade in a currently illegal wildlife product, it pays to analyse the motivations of the various players involved, as the so-called ‘rational’ (economic) arguments put forward can be adjusted to fit favoured outcomes. The question of the legalisation of the trade in rhino horn is immensely complex AND involves a massive downside risk – the risk of rhino extinction in the wild if the pro-trade strategy is flawed, which Breaking The Brand believes to be the case.

In speaking to several people working on the rhino horn demand problem, locally in Viet Nam in October 2014, BTB was told that South Africa’s pro-trade/no-trade debate was the key thing slowing the Vietnamese Government’s response to tackling consumption of rhino horn in Viet Nam.

Why would any government target its high net worth citizens, who are the primary users of genuine rhino horn, when:

1. These are the business people and entrepreneurs driving Viet Nam’s rapid economic growth and
2. What they are doing could be made legal in 2019 if the South African Government decides to take the pro-trade route.



As people stated, the pro-trade debate in South Africa effectively neutralises law enforcement based success in Viet Nam. This situation is no doubt made worse with the recent legalisation of a domestic trade in rhino horn in South Africa.

Let’s look at the pro-trade strategy from two angles:

1. Do the primary users driving the current rhino killing spree consider a farmed product as a substitute product?
2. What needs to happen in the illegal supply chain for the legal trade to stop poaching?

### 1. Demand Side and Current Consumer Desire

Evidence has been collected over several years, regarding the Vietnamese business/elite culture and its desire for ‘wild’. Unfortunately, people interested in trading rhino horn choose to ignore this factor.

Dr Rebecca Drury, of Flora & Fauna International, was one of the first to document this in 2009 and 2011: **Hungry for Success: Urban consumer demand for wild animal products in Vietnam**. Similar work, published in 2016, highlights the desire for a ‘wild’ product: **Understanding Urban Demand for Wild Meat in Vietnam: Implications for Conservation Actions**: <http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0134787>

**From the paper Understanding Urban Demand for Wild Meat in Vietnam: Implications for Conservation Actions:** For a ‘super-elite’ segment of Vietnamese society, whose members consume wild sourced animals to convey status and wealth, farmed sourced wild meat is not an appropriate substitute as it lacks the product characteristics needed to symbolically convey status and wealth—expense and rarity. Indeed, it is possible that the availability of substitutes in the market is causing these consumers to place increased emphasis on finding the rarer, wild specimens to assert inter-group differences in status and face. Where combined with a willingness and ability to pay rising prices, this could incentivize the exploitation of the last rare, wild individuals of farmed species, or alternatively, shift demand to those species whose biology precludes their being farmed.

BTB acknowledges that this research is not specific to rhino horn, however:

- a. If NGOs want an evidence based approach, then why have they not done this research specifically for rhino horn over the last 7 years as the poaching crisis took hold?
- b. Why can't conservation groups make an intuitive link from the research in to the wild meat restaurant trade in Viet Nam; the elite customers they researched, who want wild sourced meat, are the same elite users group who buy rhino horn.
- c. Remember that a significant number of high status males will not be interviewed in such a way that their answers about their illegal use of rhino horn can be recorded for scientific research and publication. It would be like asking top-level businessmen and public servants in the West/English speaking countries to talk about their levels of cocaine use, for scientific research and publication.
- d. They ignore the Rio precautionary principle: Importantly, Principle 15 of the 1992 Rio Declaration sets out the Precautionary Approach "where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing measures to prevent environmental degradation.



We can't rely on the pro-trade groups to do this investigation.

Pro-trade groups have made it clear that they don't care about understanding the nature of the current demand. In the pro-trade video: <https://vimeo.com/135540882> one of their go-to 'experts', Michael 't Sas-Rolfes states **"Rhino horn and these other products are status goods, they are prestige goods. What they are used for is hardly relevant. The fact is people are willing to pay extremely, extraordinary high prices for them."**

## 2. The Illegal Supply Chain

Let's park the whole issue of the users not seeing a farmed product as a substitute product and look at the supply chain. For a legal trade to be effective in its stated goal of eliminating – or significantly reducing – poaching it must displace the illegal trade. For this to occur the **current participants of the illegal trade must be de-incentivised to continue their illegal activities. This must occur right through the value chain** from the poacher on the ground to the criminals further up the smuggling and trading process.

The problem with assessing the economics of an illegal supply chain is that by nature the prices throughout the chain are very hard to uncover, other than the final price of the product. However, these prices across the supply chain are vital in understanding whether a legal trade would be effective in making illegal supply unprofitable because for as long as the illegal supply is more profitable it will

continue; **illegal trade will always exist if it is profitable.** In the same way that the pro-trade lobby have shown no desire to understand the true nature of the demand they have not demonstrated that they have considered this ‘whole of the supply chain’ issue in pushing for a legal trade.

Let’s unpick this a little more. The South African pro-trade lobby has proposed a so-called ‘Smart Trade’ model where horn would be sold at US\$30,000 per kilogram. This is to keep prices high enough that firstly it is profitable for rhino owners, and secondly (they say) to avoid an expansionary movement of demand at a lower price.

Now, remember for **poaching to be significantly reduced this legal supply must render illegal supply unprofitable along the supply chain.** What this assumes is that purchasing rhino horn at \$US30,000 per kilogram is cheaper than what illegal criminal syndicates can procure it for from the wild in, say, the Kruger National Park. We know very little about prices of wild rhino horn across the value chain from the on the ground poacher, to the domestic trader, international smuggler etc. However, it is very likely that the ‘product’ can be obtained at a price *below* the proposed legal market price.

The relative competitiveness of the legal and illegal market in this case is determined by the costs of poaching, bribing, smuggling, laundering compared to the costs of raising the farmed rhino and export, import and selling costs. It is known that on the ground poachers are paid relatively little for their work, and that there are people lining up ready to take the place of a slain poacher in a rhino poaching syndicate in communities bordering national parks. So, if the costs of supply in the illegal trade are lower than the legal trade, which they most likely are, poaching will continue.



**Further, in their favoured trade model, the rhino owners are making the assumption that poachers won’t take advantage of this (cartel) controlled, high price to launder illegal rhino horn in to the legal market.** This clearly defies common sense and shows yet again that the sole purpose of pushing any legalised trade model is to make money and not stop the poaching. The ability to launder illegal rhino horn in to the South African newly legal domestic trade, may be the catalyst for the recent spike in rhino poaching.

Pro-trade representatives also state they would sell to the poachers:

Statement from Izak du Toit, a lawyer representing the rhino owners and listed on pro-trade website Rhino Alive as one of their ‘Experts in the Field’ <http://www.rhinoalive.com/rhino-trade-experts/> In article: <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2015-12-01-lifting-the-ban-on-rhino-horn-trade-is-no-victory-for-rhino-owners/> du Toit stated: [If the domestic trade ban was overturned] **“We would sell [rhino horn] to the poachers to prevent them from killing rhinos.”**

Irrespective of these two major issues in relation to the effect of a legalised trade on poaching, there are also numerous problems with the model for ‘smart trade’ championed by the pro-trade group.

The document the pro-trade groups use as a basis for recommending a trade is:

<https://www.rhinoalive.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Michael-Eustace-Smart-Trade.pdf>

More detail on these issues can be found in the following 3 recent blog posts:

- Smart Trade No, Foolish Assumptions Yes (June 2016): <http://breakingthebrand.org/smart-trade-no-foolish-assumptions-yes/>
- Trade Legalisation – A Greedy Person Is The Poorest Person In The World (March 2017): <http://breakingthebrand.org/trade-legalisation-a-greedy-person-is-the-poorest-person-in-the-world/>
- Recent Spike In Rhino Poaching (June 2017): <http://breakingthebrand.org/recent-spike-in-rhino-poaching/>

### **Lack of Push Back from Large Conservation**

Much more concerning than the lack of detailed analysis from the pro-trade groups, given it would not be surprising for them to take a self-serving approach, is the lack of commentary from global and specialised conservation groups. Pro-trade groups now have achieved a legal domestic trade in South Africa and have recently conducted a rhino horn auction. Given their comments on the auction are “[We believe] people buy it as an investment and keep it so that they can trade with it as soon as international trade in rhino horns is opened.”, they are obviously confident of getting a legal international trade. So, why haven’t the large, very well-funded NGOs been able to respond and denounce the push for a legalised trade? Is it lack of skill or lack of desire?

At the heart of this issue is a conflict that is so great, that neither the agencies nor their donors are willing to talk about it. The conflict is that many large conservation agencies fundamentally back the sustainable use model, which of course implies trade. Whether they do this at the behest of their donors (mostly governments and government agencies), or whether they do this because they truly believe that their mission is compatible with ‘sustainable’ use of wildlife, is immaterial. Under neoliberal capitalism there can be no ‘sustainable’ use, since neoliberalism requires the constant expansion of markets and free trade to sustain (infinite) growth.

**When organisation say “In principle we support sustainable use”, BTB would recommend that they are pushed to clarify, do they mean eco-tourism, hunting, farming, or what exactly?** Sustainable use can only aid conservation if there is a rock-solid mechanism that can enforce the ‘sustainable’ part against market forces. Such a mechanism does not exist beyond the establishment of protected areas used solely for eco-tourism, but protected areas in many cases can’t ensure sustainable populations, for example because of the migratory nature of species or the effects of over-population of key species (such as elephants in Hwange and Chobe).

What is happening instead is that many large, small and specialist NGOs pretend that this issue does not exist or they declare, openly or covertly, that it is ‘not in their mandate’ to discuss a ‘legal’ trade, but only to comment on the ‘illegal’ trade.

By and large they refuse to comment on ‘legal’ trade in wildlife, instead focussing their effort on lobbying governments to use the CITES Conference of the Parties to get the species that play well with the interested public (large cats, elephants etc.) listed under Appendix 1 and hence stop any legal trade.

There are three perfect examples of this in recent times:

1. CoP 17 Submission

The customers for rhino horn weren’t mentioned in a submission to CITES CoP17 by key rhino NGOs:

<https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/cop/17/WorkingDocs/E-CoP17-68-A5.pdf> When I have discussed this preference for

wild horn with individuals working at a key wildlife trade agency, I was told that an opinion on an a ‘legal’ trade is not within their mandate, so they didn’t make it part of their consumer

research. Surely, what is right for the animal should be the priority, not the scope of an organisations mandate?



2. Lack of Challenge to Poor Quality Research

In April 2017, the International Trade Centre published a paper titled: Demand in Viet Nam for rhinoceros horn used in traditional medicine:

([http://www.intracen.org/uploadedFiles/intracenorg/Content/Publications/11\\_V\\_Public%20Information\\_Publications\\_2016-2017%20Bienn.pdf](http://www.intracen.org/uploadedFiles/intracenorg/Content/Publications/11_V_Public%20Information_Publications_2016-2017%20Bienn.pdf)).

The ITC (an independent arm of the WTO and the UN) paper focuses on Traditional Asian Medicine (TAM). It states that the ITC conducted a survey of 1,000 consumers of TAM, including 239 people who self-disclosed they used rhino horn. So, the first questions must be:

- a. Did they interview the users of genuine rhino horn or those buying fake rhino horn?
- b. Just how relevant was their survey group to the trade/no-trade debate?

The paper itself states (page 54) that the price of illegally poached rhino horn [in Viet Nam] is US\$8,400/100g. So, let’s look at the income of the group surveyed (page 12).

Figure 6: Income distribution



Source: ITC survey

Of the 1,000 people interviewed, 950 had an income of less than US\$882/month (20 Million VND/Month = US\$882/Month). So what does that mean about the groups’ purchasing power for genuine rhino horn?

**All the ITC research can say is that some of the 50 people in the top income bracket surveyed MAY have a sufficiently high disposable income to afford illegally poached genuine rhino horn.**

They can’t prove if they surveyed anyone earning a sufficiently high monthly income to guarantee they were (consistently) buying genuine rhino horn in relevant quantities.

If you just look at the wealthiest monthly income quoted, then a person earning this would need to spend their entire monthly income to buy 10grams of rhino horn! **How relevant do you think this group is to informing the trade/no-trade debate?**

This paper was quoted in The Economist: <https://www.economist.com/news/finance-and-economics/21721671-just-likely-it-would-spur-demand-further-endangering-creature-might> BTB's question is, where were the criticisms of this research and paper from global and specialist NGO who would know that these income levels of the people interviewed make them irrelevant to the trade debate? BTB's response to the research and be found in blog: A Load of Bollocks (April 2017): <http://breakingthebrand.org/a-load-of-bollocks/>

### 3. Response to Rhino Horn Auction

In August 2017, John Hume conducted the first legal online auction of rhino horn in South Africa, after the domestic trade was legalised earlier in the year. The auction was advertised in both China and Viet Nam and the auction website was in English, Mandarin and Vietnamese

Whilst there was a lot of MSM coverage of the auction, the global, specialist IWT and rhino NGOs were either silent or said very little. Some said they didn't want to give the auction more airtime, so that fewer people would get to know about it and participate. Given the marketing campaigns of the pro-trade groups and the fact that the MSM gave the auction plenty of coverage, because of its novelty and controversy value, this invalidated the NGO's 'let's ignore it' strategy.

When NGOs did discuss the auction, it was mostly done around very narrow arguments:

- About the timing of the auction and lack of process controls, for example it was done before any clear rules and permit systems for a domestic trade have been established in South Africa.
- No real market for rhino horn in South Africa

**The question is why do NGO's keep to such narrow arguments, and seem to ignore the critical factors?** While we have discussed previously not saying anything to upset donors who are pro- 'sustainable use' let's consider another reason, outlined in the blog Want To Know Why Conservation Is Failing? Read On... (April 2017): <http://breakingthebrand.org/want-to-know-why-conservation-is-failing-read-on/> In this blog, BTB outlines the need for professional development in the conservation sector to support the development of strategic thinking capabilities and a move away from the limitations of the specialist, expert.

We give an analogy from Vikram Mansharamani – Lecturer at Yale University – if we think in terms of a forest, corporations around the world have come to value expertise and, in so doing, **have created a collection of individuals studying bark. There are many who have deeply studied its nooks, grooves, colouration, and texture. Few have developed the understanding that the bark is merely the outermost layer of a tree. Fewer still understand the tree is embedded in a forest.** Conservation's response to the rhino horn auction feels like this 'studying bark' analogy.



For more information on this see blog The Elephant In The Room (August 2017): <http://breakingthebrand.org/the-elephant-in-the-room/>

## Implications for BTB and the Evolution to Nature Needs More

Breaking The Brand was launched in early 2013 to carry out research into the primary users of wildlife ‘products’ (for want of a better word) and to create demand reduction campaigns that resonate with these users and trigger a behaviour change. Using a combination of all the leading research into behavioural economics, social psychology, cultural anthropology and behaviour change, together with adapting successful strategies used in anti-smoking and road safety campaigns and with over 20 years’ experience working in corporate culture change, executive coaching and business strategy consulting; it was only our intention to do a couple of demonstration projects, whilst simultaneously working with large conservation to support them in understanding the benefits of well targeted demand reduction campaigns.

It became apparent in the intervening years that, while the social validation of the demand reduction process is happening, progress is too slow within the global and specialist conservation players. Whilst much of what they work on can be commended, when it comes to the wildlife trade, they are lumbering when they need to be nimble; and there are too few signs that they are willing to learn fast enough for the wildlife we care about. If they can’t move faster to save the iconic species currently under threat, how will they save the rest? **Their reports consistently drive home the urgency of the crisis, while internally they maintain their ‘business as usual’ approach.**

Large conservation in its current incarnation has become a self-sustaining system and given how the illegal wildlife trade has evolved to be so commercially ruthless, the current system appears to have only a limited relevance in solving the whole of the wildlife trade problem. What has become crystal clear over the last 4 years is that the Breaking The Brand campaigns cannot succeed at the small scale we can fund and that the beliefs, perceived constraints and behaviour of the neo-liberal donors, pro-trade lobby and large conservation agencies outlined in the previous sections of the report undermine the success of the rhino demand reduction campaigns. These factors will also undermine the success of demand reduction campaigns in general, when applied to other species.

Large conservation (and its government agency partners) received \$1.3bn in funding to fight the illegal wildlife trade between 2010 and 2016 from large donors alone; yet the successes are few and far between. The system seems more concerned with self-preservation than with being useful when it comes to tackling the demand for illegal wildlife products.

As a result, the Breaking The Brand team has been considering what is needed to create a new way of doing wildlife conservation. We decided that Breaking The Brand will be incorporated in to Nature Needs More (NNM): <http://natureneedsmore.org/> over the course of 2017/2018.



NATURE NEEDS MORE  
THE NEW WAY OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

To create lasting change and not just isolated, infrequent and often temporary victories, we:

1. Can’t continue to work on demand reduction in isolation from the supply side and the push for legalised trade,
2. Need to move away from the sustainable use/neoliberal model of conservation (which in essence says that ‘if it pays it stays’),

3. Need to change the nature of the conversation with the interested public and draw attention to the flawed assumptions that lead to failure of the current system,
4. Need to move away from tax deductibility as the key motivation to donate to a cause,
5. Create a new story of our relationship with the natural world that does not start from a position of superiority and that does not commodify wildlife, and
6. Need to think differently about the way poverty is addressed in the (mostly poor) range countries as the old ‘development = jobs + prosperity’ model is no longer valid in a world with a massive surplus of labour.



Whilst these are significant objectives, we do not presume that we will be alone in driving this new way of thinking about conservation and we further believe that the timing is right to evolve how we think about and do wildlife conservation work.

The main reason is, that our agenda in this space is aligned with the current political struggle to end the reign of neoliberalism in the fields of economics and politics.

Populations in the countries with the worst excesses of neoliberalism have now reached a point where they are actively canvassing new options, be it in the form of ‘populism’ or ‘socialism’. **Anything but more of the same seems to be the primary message in the search for better answers at this time.**

During such transitions, which seem to be happening every 30-50 years, it becomes possible to create and embed new stories that will guide us on the largest scale for the next cycle. As the old stories lose their spell and relevance by colliding with a lived reality that no longer fits the myth, people briefly search for new and ‘better’ answers. Propositions that were ‘impossible’ become entirely feasible virtually overnight – see the current discussions about a Universal Basic Income, an idea that is literally centuries old but which was out of the question for as long as work = worth was the main paradigm of capitalism.

We hope that by putting forward not just new stories and ways to think about conservation and addressing poverty, but also by creating demonstration projects to showcase how these approaches can work, we will make Nature Needs More’s work relevant beyond the immediate impact on say a species under threat from the illegal wildlife trade. Obviously, what and how we go about this will have to evolve in response to the ‘feedback’ we encounter from those who are not hopelessly attached to the old thinking or bound by their adherence to a failing system.

In this sense Nature Needs More is not so much an ‘organisation’ or an entity, but an evolving idea.

## NNM Objectives and Strategy

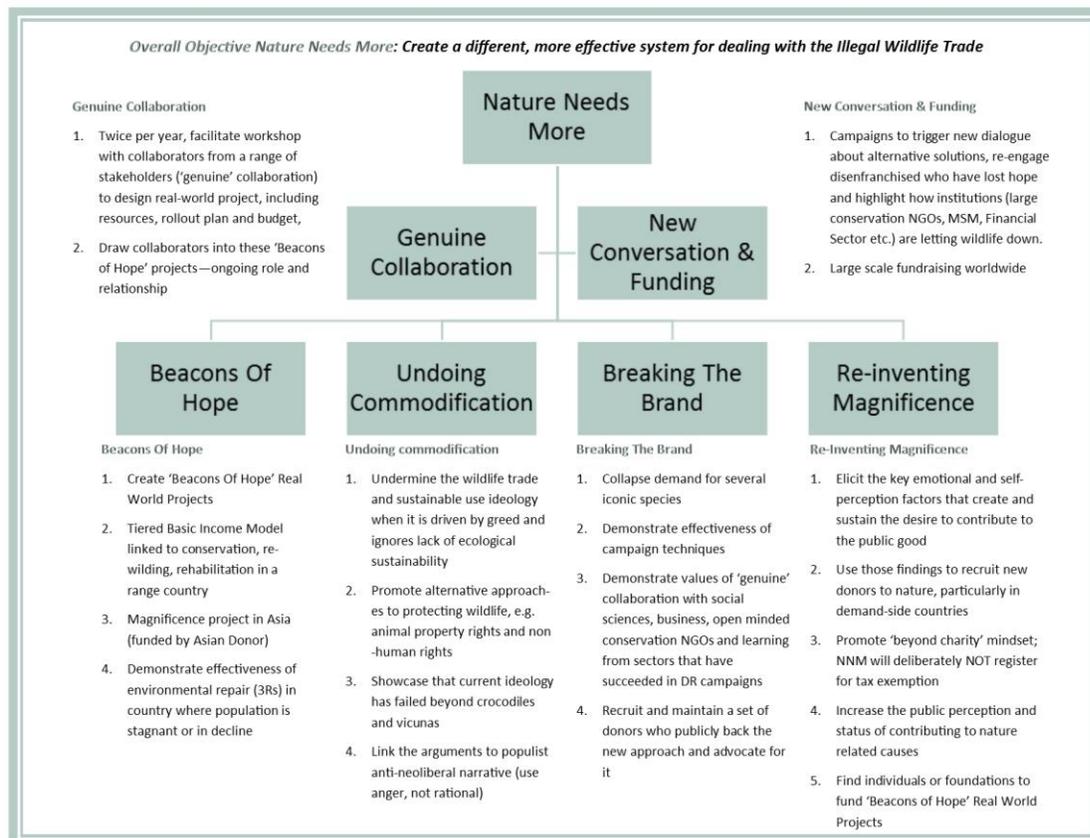
The main objective for Nature Needs More is to demonstrate that conservation and especially conservation work addressing the illegal wildlife trade can and should be done differently to focus on lasting outcomes that work not just for wildlife, but also the people in range countries living close to protected areas.

The starting point for such an undertaking is to acknowledge what hasn't worked:

1. Relying on CITES and its implementation by signatory countries
2. Believing the sustainable use model can withstand market forces
3. Believing that 'development' and 'jobs' will get people in range countries out of poverty
4. Relying on donors who demand adherence to underlying principles that clash with conservation objectives (such as 'free trade' and 'free markets')

We are under no illusions that these things can be addressed quickly, as they are all deeply embedded in the (still) prevailing current ideology of neoliberalism. But the neoliberals started developing their ideology in 1947 and had to wait 30 years for it to become the 'go-to' paradigm when the post second world-war order unravelled beginning in the mid-seventies.

How to best overcome these issues will have to evolve in conjunction with the evolving thinking in other areas, such as economics and politics. In the first instance, we are going to pick a number of areas where NNM will focus on proactively shaping this new story:



## Breaking The Brand

BTB will be retained under NNM and we will continue to run demand reduction campaigns for rhino horn and potentially other illegal wildlife products in Viet Nam and other destination countries. We will also continue to work with other agencies in the demand reduction space and provide insights, research and demonstration campaigns to help the other players evolve to using more targeted demand reduction campaigns and to help get them to accept that in some instances the use of fear/pain, and not just positive messaging, is a legitimate tool in achieving behaviour change.



We will also continue to research the best way to re-direct the desire to consume illegal wildlife products for status purposes – see the next section on Re-Inventing Magnificence.

## Re-Inventing Magnificence

Given many illegal wildlife products are consumed as luxury items BTB started to research the history and psychology of luxury. As part of the initial literature search the concept of **Magnificence vs. Luxury** caught our attention. In its origins, **luxury was not a term to describe consumption by elites, but one used to denigrate the aspirational consumer practices of the newly emerging wealthy classes.** In contrast, magnificence is related to the positive uses of wealth, i.e. doing something valuable for the public/greater good.

Historical word describing Magnificence



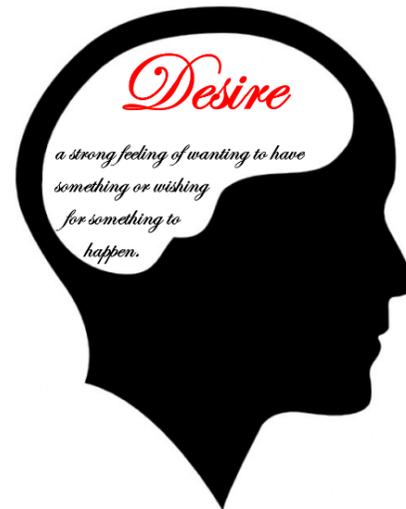
Historical words describing Luxury



This overwhelmingly negative view of luxury slowly disappeared from the 16th to 18th century as a class of newly wealthy emerged (merchants, business owners) and the language of magnificence was subverted to now describe luxury. By the 19th century magnificence was largely forgotten and confined to individual acts of greatness and luxury had, for the most part, lost its negative connotations. Today, few people will have even heard of magnificence and luxury consumptions is something most people aspire to. As a result, we started asking the question, can we re-invent magnificence and make conservation the new black? To read more (January 2016 Blog): <http://breakingthebrand.org/re-inventing-magnificence-conservation-is-the-new-black/>

Currently users of illegal wildlife products in Asia gain status, influence, power and/or prestige with their peer group by consuming these rare and precious ‘products’ or gifting them. While in the short-term demand reduction/behaviour change campaigns will be needed to change people’s motivations to consume illegal and endangered wildlife ‘products’, to ensure a long-term sustainable future we must provide alternative ways to engage with nature. This involves re-directing desire as the final step in demand reduction campaigns.

We cannot re-direct these users to ‘legal luxury consumption’. Simply reverting to mainstream luxury products does not fulfil their desire for differentiation and would be seen as a backward step by the elite users of illegal wildlife products. **Many of the target group already engage in all forms of ‘legal luxury consumption’, which is one of the reasons they have moved to ‘illegal luxury consumption’ to differentiate themselves from the broader elite group.** For this group, if we don’t provide a motivation to not consume products from nature, they will simply substitute one product for another (e.g. rhino horn, ivory, helmeted hornbill [red ivory]) in response to demand reduction campaigns. We must accept that these new ways to engage with nature may be driven by a wide range of personal values and needs.



We are currently researching a way of re-inventing magnificence in a way that fits with the move away from neoliberal capitalism. This new magnificence could be a motivation to contribute to the natural world rather than consume its ‘products’. We accept that the motivations to contribute will be a way to provide these elites an alternative to fulfil their self-image needs and a way to ‘win’ in the social comparison stakes. Therefore, **the language of magnificence will have to include elite differentiation, status and prestige, but also bring back the commons and common good, which was lost by a self-serving luxury lifestyle.** To read more:

- Reinventing Magnificence - The Motivation To Contribute (One page summary): <http://natureneedsmore.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Motivation-to-Contribute-1-Page-Summary-Website.pdf>
- The Motivation To Contribute Research – Preliminary Results (July 2017): <http://breakingthebrand.org/the-motivation-to-contribute-research-preliminary-results/>

### Undoing Commodification

The commodification (sometimes also called financialization) of nature is a necessary by-product of a capitalist mode of production. It can’t be undone without undermining capitalism. Given that the unfettered growth of capitalism is no longer feasible with the decline in available net energy and the ecological limits to further growth, it is time to rethink commodification in the context of conservation.

Currently most traditional large conservation agencies willingly buy into the commodification paradigm through embracing the ‘sustainable use’ model, despite plenty of evidence that this model has not produced anything ecologically sustainable. We continue to lose habitats and species at record rates.

Another favourite euphemism for continued commoditisation of nature is pricing ‘ecosystem services’. Designed to ‘solve’ the externalities problem in capitalism, all it does is create new tradeable commodities.

Re-balancing human activity and the natural world, with a focus on achieving ecological sustainability, is first and foremost a people-centred challenge. While society is seen as no more than ‘the economy’ and people are reduced to ‘resources’, ‘consumers’ or ‘labour’, we can’t be surprised that nature has also been commoditised. **We now speak of ‘natural resources’, ‘game’ and ‘land’, a vernacular that doesn’t instil magnificence and, as a result, we see the ongoing plunder of the natural world.**

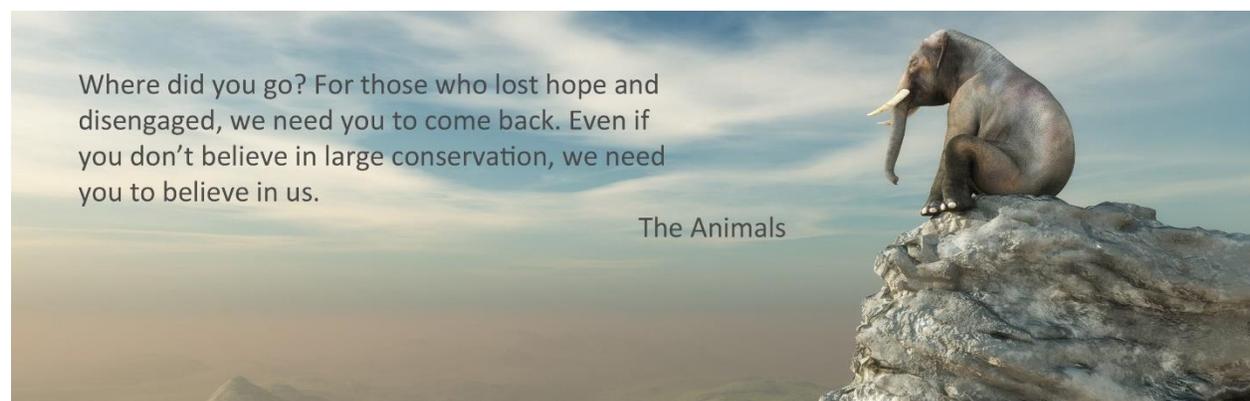
We are exploring a number of options to shift the focus away from commodification to a new, modern way to re-establish the commons. These include:

1. Making a Basic Income the default option for supporting poor communities in areas with high ecological value. This model will explore, if people don’t have to worry about food security will illegal poaching, hunting and harvesting be greatly reduced?
2. The consideration of non-human rights for key species and by extension the ecosystems needed to support them. Once we acknowledge in a legal sense that these species have a right to exist, private property rights will have to be balanced against their non-human rights.
3. Rethinking access and use rights for conservation areas. Any enclosed space with exclusive (paid) access is by definition commoditised. In the first instance access and use rights for local communities need to be considered. In addition, property rights for wildlife must be explored.

We will continue to consult a very broad range of experts and disciplines in this space, aligning ourselves with those who have moved beyond capitalism and the ‘if it pays it stays’ view of conservation.

### **A New Conversation**

Over the last two decades people have deserted large conservation, not because they don’t care about nature, but precisely because they do. BTB has lost count of the number of people we discussed the crisis facing the natural world with, who said “I used to donate to this organisation or that organisation, but I haven’t for years because I don’t believe in them anymore”.



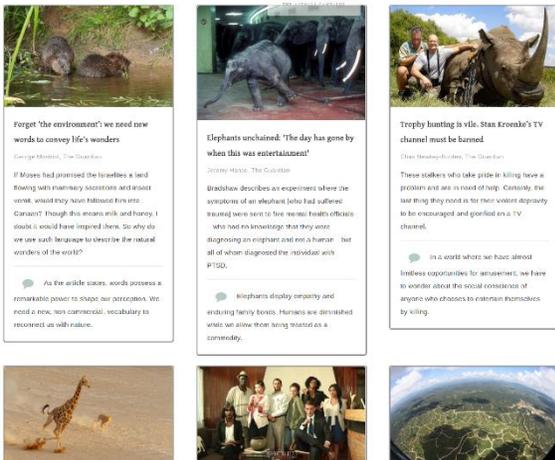
More-and-more people have and are becoming disillusioned with mainstream conservation's unwillingness to recognise how the issues have evolved so dramatically and that their old strategies are no longer working in protecting wildlife and the environment. Nature Needs More will actively seek out the people who have disengaged from conservation and encourage them to come back and actively participate in solutions that they can believe in.

**A starting point is changing the conversation and acknowledging there are many better solutions to saving the natural world other than commodifying it.** At Nature Needs More we would like to help to re-ignite the conversation about the true range of possibilities. Though you may not agree with everything that is on the table, we encourage you to talk about these options, no matter how impossible or far-fetched they may currently appear. By way of a prompt, Nature Needs More has created a series of billboard posters. We don't have the funds to publish them on billboards worldwide, we hope you find them interesting, share them and research the options suggested.



The background to these campaigns and useful links can be seen via: <http://natureneedsmore.org/the-animals-campaign/>

In addition, NNM we will monitor the conversation about what is happening to the natural world. We



are seeing a shift, people are talking about and looking for pragmatism and fairness in taking care of and re-habilitating nature.

NNM will share some of the new conversations via:

<http://natureneedsmore.org/conversation-is-changing/>

In addition, we will also highlight example projects we term as Beacons of Hope:

<http://natureneedsmore.org/beacons-of-hope-examples/>

## Beacons Of Hope

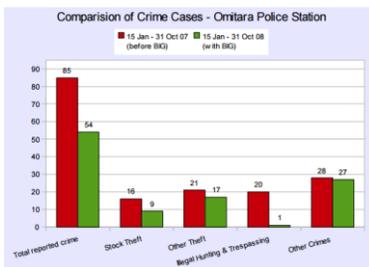
Nature Needs More is committed to demonstrating how conservation can be approached differently to the mainstream. We have already done this in the area of demand reduction for the illegal wildlife trade and we are planning to add two new demonstration projects over the next couple of years, in both range and demand side countries, outlined below.

### Range Side: Can a Basic Income Stop The Illegal Wildlife Trade?



There are currently a number of basic income experiments running in or being considered for the African continent. Yet none of these trials have been linked to conservation and wildlife protection. We are in the middle of the 6th global extinction, with accelerating rates of species loss and major threats to iconic species such as rhinos and elephants.

Current conservation models have failed, as they are fundamentally based on a sustainable use approach to wildlife protection. Programs that provide employment and revenue sharing at tourism or hunting conservancies have equally failed to stop poaching and illegal harvesting; there has been too little transparency about what actually gets to the community. In the 2015 the Panama Papers (11.5 million leaked documents from just one Panamanian law firm), highlighted at least 30 safari operators who were sending their profits offshore to tax havens.



As a result of these and other factors, Nature Needs More is exploring a basic income approach, such as the GiveDirectly model (<https://www.givedirectly.org/vision>), but linked to conservation outcomes, as a way to significantly change the incentives and hence behaviour of communities living in and around protected wildlife areas.

The Namibian basic income trial ([http://www.bignam.org/Publications/BIG\\_Assessment\\_report\\_08b.pdf](http://www.bignam.org/Publications/BIG_Assessment_report_08b.pdf)) was not directly linked to conservation, but saw a great reduction in illegal hunting.

Financial security would not only mean less poaching for food and less illegal harvesting, but could also mean wildlife trafficking syndicates would have less leverage to recruit poachers and informers from the impoverished communities neighbouring key conservation areas.

In addition, we would like to ascertain if communities feel they benefit from neighbouring protection areas through a basic income, they would be more likely to engage with conservation. This would be

tested through using a **tiered basic income model**, where activities linked to conservation (**what Nature Needs More calls the new 3Rs – rehabilitation, re-vegetation and re-wilding**) would translate into a higher level of basic income.

More on this project can be seen via: <http://natureneedsmore.org/basic-income-trials/> This will be added to in the coming months as NNM has been invited to present this model at the 2017 Basic Income Congress: <http://basicincome.org/17th-bien-congress-portugal/>

### **Demand Side: Can Re-Inventing Magnificence Provide The Motivation to Contribute Rather Than Consume?**

As mentioned above, currently, Nature Needs More (and Breaking The Brand) Founder, Dr Lynn Johnson, is undertaking research into the motivation to contribute to the common good rather than continuing to indulge in excessive luxury consumption.

Interviews conducted with wealthy business people are uncovering the motivations, language patterns and impacts on personal identity of contribution. If we want the newly wealthy elite in China and South East Asia to abstain from luxury consumption of illegal and endangered wildlife, we must understand what prompted the elites in other parts of the world to focus their attention on contribution instead.

We already know that the elites in SE Asia are motivated by status, prestige and differentiation, and we also know that they are influenced by Western business and political celebrities, but we don't know how to shift this motivation to activities that aid endangered wildlife instead of harming it. The results will be used to create new campaigns in Viet Nam and China to redirect the desire of wealthy consumers away from consumption of wildlife 'products' to making a contribution to the natural world.

In the process of conducting the research interviewees will be exploring example projects that would potentially appeal to the Vietnamese elite's need for status and prestige and how this can be used to re-connecting wealthy, urban Vietnamese with wildlife.

### **Conservation Labs**

As part of the NNM model, the team commits to facilitating 2 Conservation Labs each year. To launch this initiative, we were delighted to support the amazing work being done by Donalea Patman OAM, Founder of For The Love Of Wildlife ( <http://fortheloveofwildlife.org.au/>) in Australia and Fiona Gordon of Gordon Consulting ( <https://gordonconsulting.org/completed-projects/>) in New Zealand as they push for domestic trade bans on rhino horn and elephant ivory, of any age, in both counties.



This event brought together representatives from conservation, business, the media and government to join forces to develop strategies and messaging to bring about the necessary change.

## Next Steps



For the rest of 2017 and 2018 we are planning to concentrate on the following projects under the Nature Needs More banner:

### **1. Breaking The Brand Campaign 6**

Our latest demand reduction campaign will be running until March 2018 and we will conduct a qualitative and quantitative evaluation if we can get access to a sufficiently large number of members in the relevant target group in Viet Nam.

### **2. Magnificence Research**

We will continue the magnificence interviews in the USA, Australia, Singapore and China. In total, we hope to get to 30+ interviews to extract the main patterns underpinning engagement in the public good and especially in conservation. Based on these patterns we hope to create campaigns that 1) Redirect desire, achieving the final step in demand reduction, and 2) Change the target group's relationship to nature, from consuming to contributing.

### **3. Basic Income Model Linked To Conservation**

NNM's abstract 'Can a Basic Income Stop the Illegal Wildlife Trade?' has been accepted for presentation at the Basic Income Earth Network Congress in Lisbon in late September 2017. We will use this congress to gather feedback on the proposal, refine the trial design and to seek the location, partners and funders for conducting the trial starting in late 2018.

### **4. Fundraising Model**

We aim to launch a new global fundraising initiative in 2018 to raise the funds to scale up our demand reduction campaigns and to contribute funding to the basic income trial.

### **5. A New Conversation**

We will continue our work in advocating new solutions to 'wicked' conservation problems; solutions that fall outside the (still) accepted paradigm of neoliberalism, free trade and sustainable use. We will do this through our blogs, media interviews and articles and through opportunities to speak at conferences and workshops.

## Acknowledgements

This work could not have been achieved without the support of a number of individuals and organisation. While this list is by no means exhaustive, given the people who have helped over the last few years, BTB would like to acknowledge the following:

Nicholas Duncan, Co-Founder and President of the Save African Rhino Foundation for not only donating to BTB, but also opening doors for and encouraging our research. These thanks are extended to Mike & Eva Palmer and the SARF committee and sub-committee.

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To our amazing donors and supporters: <http://breakingthebrand.org/supporters/>

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**This list is by no means comprehensive. Thank you all from Breaking The Brand & Nature Needs More**