Country Profile: South Africa

Project Title: Strengthening Institutions, Information Management, and Monitoring to Reduce the Rate of Illegal Wildlife Trade in South Africa

Project Sites: National coverage with specific community conservation in Kruger National Park

Species Focus: Elephants, rhinos, and lions

Total Project Cost: $4.9 million

Executing Partner: Department of Environmental Affairs of the Ministry of Environment

GEF Implementing Agency: UNEP

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CONTEXT

South Africa has an incredibly rich biodiversity, third only after Brazil and Indonesia. The country boasts of an abundance of wildlife, including 82% of Africa’s rhinoceros. This wildlife provides an important ecological resource for the country and is critical for the livelihoods of communities that live with them. Escalating wildlife crime threaten these precious resources, and can lead to insecurity and economic losses from reduced tourism potential. South Africa is at the epicenter of the poaching crisis, as highlighted by the number of rhinos killed which went from 13 in 2007 to 1175 in 2015.

The South African Government is committed to combatting illegal wildlife trade. South Africa is a major participant in the CITES Rhinoceros Enforcement Task Force and associated strategies and actions. It is also a CITES and Livelihoods working group member.

PROJECT COMPONENTS

The GWP South Africa project aims to fight against illegal wildlife trade through institutional strengthening, improved information management, and monitoring, thereby influencing the supply system at local (protected areas), national (South Africa), and regional levels and improving monitoring and collaboration at an international level.

The project components are:

1. A centralized system for effective wildlife trade monitoring and assessment
2. Development of a ready-to-use electronic permitting system for trade in species
3. Community empowerment, education, and awareness

See the World Bank website for more information: **Global Wildlife Program**