

MINOR

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Submission from Minor International in Support of the Proposed Australian Ivory Ban

I write to you today on behalf of Minor International Pcl, one of the largest hospitality and leisure companies in the Asia Pacific Region, to pledge support for the ban on Australia's domestic trade in ivory and rhino horn. Head quartered in Thailand we have strong global business interests, including in Australia and the range states of both African and Asian Elephants.

Across our international footprint we are dedicated to nature conservation and specifically to elephant conservation, as demonstrated through our charitable foundations The Golden Triangle Asian Elephant Foundation in Asia and Land & Life Foundation in East Africa. Additionally I personally joined WildAid in calling for a complete ban on the domestic ivory trade in our native Thailand through their #IvoryFreeTH campaign. I am a member of the Founders Circle for the Coalition of Business Leaders to call for the same.

Through our partners in East and Southern Africa, key regions in which we operate, we have watched in dismay as elephants and rhinos have been consistently killed for their ivory. Even as Minor International and our partners, among many others, have invested increasing money and resources to keep them safe, the poaching continues.

In Asia, we have observed the ivory trade closely as it continues to expand, utilising increasingly complex trade routes which intersect through and to the countries where we operate. As traffickers persistently evade international laws we have seen the costs of protecting our own ivory-carrying elephants increase as opportunistic poachers seek to make up for intercepted shipments by sourcing locally. More recently we have watched with horror a poaching epidemic unfold in Myanmar, feeding an ivory and elephant skin market largely driven by overseas tourists taking advantage of a legal domestic trade.

In order to persuade Asian countries to end their domestic ivory trade, better protect their own elephants and to help them better police their borders from illegal imports I believe it is essential that countries such as Australia, who without native elephants to protect have arguably less to directly gain, lead the way.

By enforcing a total ban on ivory and rhino horn the Australian Government will demonstrate to the world that not only is an ivory trade unconscionable in the face of ongoing slaughter but also that Australia firmly believes that even a limited legal trade will foster too much temptation for organised criminals to attempt to beat the system.

Yours Faithfully,

William E Heinecke

References

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