

Environmental groups in save-the-rhino boycott ultimatum

The *Daily News* reports that environmental groups have threatened to boycott South Africa's agricultural and tourism industries if the government fails to protect rhinos from becoming extinct. A Global Rhino Ultimatum, organised by the International Animal Rescue Foundation, has been making its way online and through social networks, and has drawn more than 11 500 signatures in the past few weeks.

The foundation is demanding that the government stop issuing rhino trophy hunting permits, stop the sale of state-owned rhino, commission a census of the rhino population in South Africa, and destroy all stock-piled rhino horn.

The ultimatum is leading up to a public parliamentary hearing set to take place on January 26. The Department of Water and Environmental Affairs has said this hearing will aim to find solutions to the poaching crisis. The ultimatum requires 250 000 signatures in 60 days, stating: "Everyday of this 60 day global petition action, three rhino will be butchered in South Africa for their horns." At R478 000 a kilogram, a single rhino horn is worth around over R2 million, making it more valuable than cocaine and gold on the black market.

According to the *Daily News*, the ultimatum will be delivered on 22 February 2012 to government ministers, including President Jacob Zuma, Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe, minister of international relations and co-operation, Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, and minister of water and environmental affairs, Edna Molewa. The government will then have until 22 April to meet the foundation's requirements, or face a boycott of agricultural and service exports.

Read the [full article](#) on www.iol.co.za.

For more information, go to www.international-animalrescue-foundation.org.uk.