

Conservation Justice, Human Rights and the Poaching Wars

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Linking conservation and global security



MAISHA is an innovative security and risk management consultancy with a focus on environment and counter-trafficking of contraband and natural resources.

MISSION STATEMENT Maisha provides strategic security solutions based on innovative, cost effective technology, socio-cultural and geo-political competence, and personal commitment to the client.

Interventionism and war for biodiversity

- Increased rates of rhino and elephant poaching
- Eckersley (2007) debates ecocide:
- Should the international community stand by and allow the deliberate massacre of the last populations of endangered species?

Poacher Terrorist, Ranger Hero

- Growing narrative of poachers as linked to global terrorism
- Calls for a forceful/militarised response
- Mirrors justifications used for intervention in Iraq and Afghanistan



US Congressional Hearing

'Evidence is mounting that Al-Shabab, an al-Qaeda affiliate, and the Lord's Resistance Army are using these illegal animal products to fund their brutal campaigns of violence throughout the region'

Material effects

- July 2013, President Barack Obama issued Executive Order 13648 on Combating Wildlife Trafficking
- 2013 USAID made US\$40 million available for projects to tackle poaching and trade
- Clinton Global Initiative pledged to raise US\$80 million



Just Wars and inevitable casualties

- Magic number of '1000 rangers killed'
- Figure is an underestimate
- Hard to obtain figures on deaths of those identified as poachers, but simply the lives of *suspected* poachers don't matter.

War by Conservation

- Draws on techniques and technologies of neoliberalism and of contemporary warfare
- Surveillance, drones, private military companies, camera traps
- Eg Google drones project with ZSL and WWF in Northern Kenya
- Eg Maisha Consulting deployed by WWF in Garamba NP (DRC) and Dzangha-Sangha NP (CAR)

Conclusion

- We have been here before (Operation Lock, KAS Enterprises, Shoot to Kill in the Zambezi Valley)
- It didn't work then and it won't work now
- Short term solution which is counter productive in the long term
- Arguably a more deadly fad than market based conservation approaches