

Annual Report 2021



Active
For Animals

Sentiment without action is the ruin of the soul. - Ed Abbey



Founder's Report

As I wrote in this section of the **Active for Animals'** very first annual report, in 2020, launching a new charity in January 2020 wasn't great timing!

As we reach the end of 2021, our lives have not returned to the 'old' normal. Many more people are acknowledging that the COVID-19 pandemic, a disease that is zoonotic in nature, has triggered change and we must adapt to this 'new' normal. While the first two years of **Active for Animals** have been difficult, this is a daily reminder of why I have chosen to do this work.

This report outlines **Active for Animals** work during 2021, including our research into how to trigger behavior change in the USA, understand how people ignore the plight of the natural world and investigate the consumption of wildlife products within the USA. Key has been to start to educate people to the risks of ignoring biodiversity loss.

I am delighted to introduce **World Games For Wildlife**. **Active for Animals** has joined forces with two other grassroots charities, Nature Needs More and SAVE African Rhino Foundation, to create a platform that allows supporters to create their own fundraising event based on their personal, athletic interests and fitness goals. **World Games For Wildlife** has been designed to test how to access new groups, who maybe haven't traditionally thought about giving to wildlife. Obviously, many parts of the world are crazy about sports. The question is, can we use this passion for sports as a spark to get more people **Active for Animals**?

Active for Animals has also undertaken some small domestic campaigns about the consumption of endangered species happening in the USA; these included the shark fin and reptile skin trade.

Finally, while I have not had the chance to travel to Viet Nam to undertake research on the current demand for rhino horn, there have been investigations to see if the drivers for rhino horn demand have changed, because of the global pandemic, which are covered in the report.

I hope I can inspire you to join me to get **Active for Animals**.

James Dunton
Founder, **Active for Animals**

Active for Animals' Mission

In finding the right name for the organization it had to be a simple, clear statement of our goal of supporting more people to become active to help save wildlife and their habitat.

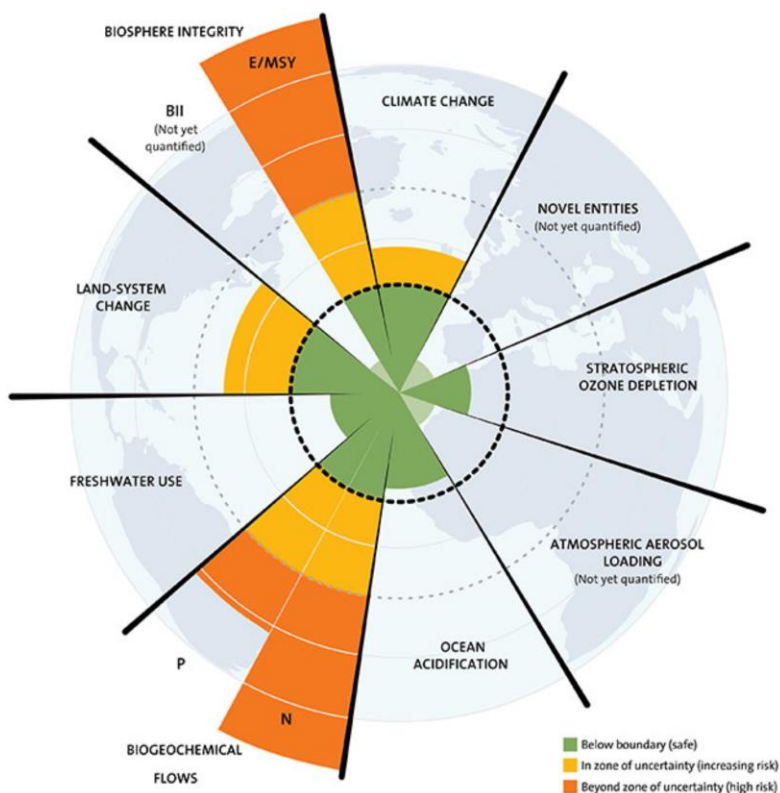
Active for Animals' Mission: To inspire people around the world to get active in helping endangered animals.

The two years of the COVID19 pandemic have highlighted what can happen because the natural world has had too little of our focus, for too long. Yet **Active For Animals** cannot be naïve about the difficulty of this mission. As the US based Charity Navigator platform highlights, only 3% of non-government donations go to Animals and the Environment. The scale of biodiversity loss we are seeing, and the resulting risks for humanity, cannot be addressed while too few people are focused on this issue.

During the year, **Active for Animals'** research has concentrated on how to have more of the 97% of people who are currently active for human related causes provide some of their time, energy and funds to non-human animals. This is not about doing less for people but **adding** a small component of annual giving to animals and the environment.

For many people this is about understanding the risks to humanity and our way of life. One of the best models to explain the risks to people is the **Nine Planetary Boundaries** concept, of the Stockholm Resilience Center. In 2009, an international group of scientists came together to identify the processes that regulate the stability and resilience of our planet.

The scientists proposed planetary boundaries, within which humanity can continue to develop and thrive for generations to come. Crossing these boundaries increases the risk of generating large-scale abrupt or irreversible environmental changes.



Most people around the world are now paying attention to climate change because the planet is more visibly unstable, with floods, fires and droughts. With climate change, the world is assessed as being in the Zone of Uncertainty (increasing risk)

From a biointegrity perspective, the planetary boundaries model shows that we are well beyond the Zone of Uncertainty and in the High-Risk Zone; biodiversity loss has huge implications for human health and security, but too many people are not aware of the risks to humanity of ecosystem failure. **Active for Animals** mission is to help people understand this and, as a result, become more active to slow the factors driving biodiversity loss.

Our Projects and Campaigns

World Games For Wildlife

The World Games For Wildlife project has been created as **both an awareness raising and fundraising campaign**. For this project, **Active for Animals** has joined forces with two other grassroots conservation charities, Nature Needs More, based in Melbourne, Australia and SAVE African Rhino Foundation, based in Perth, Australia. Together we have created a platform that allows supporters to design their own fundraising event based on their personal interests and fitness goals.

But this platform has been created to target those people who currently don't really know much about the extinction crisis. **World Games For Wildlife** has been designed to test how to access new groups, who maybe haven't traditionally thought about giving to wildlife. Obviously, many parts of the world are crazy about sports. The question is, can we use this passion for sports as a spark to get more people **Active for Animals**?

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How It Works

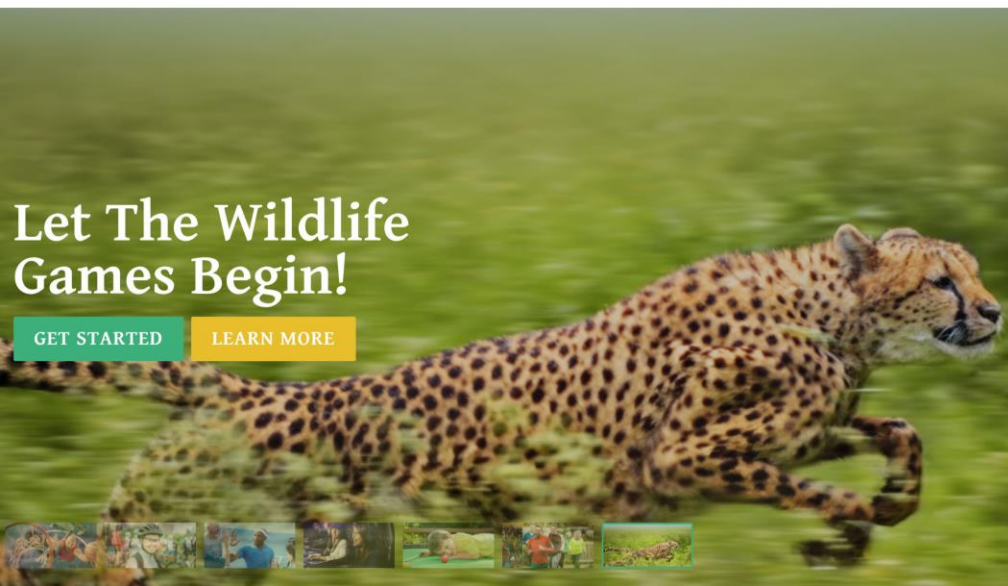
It's a simple decision, you accept that wildlife can no longer face the challenge of their extinction alone.

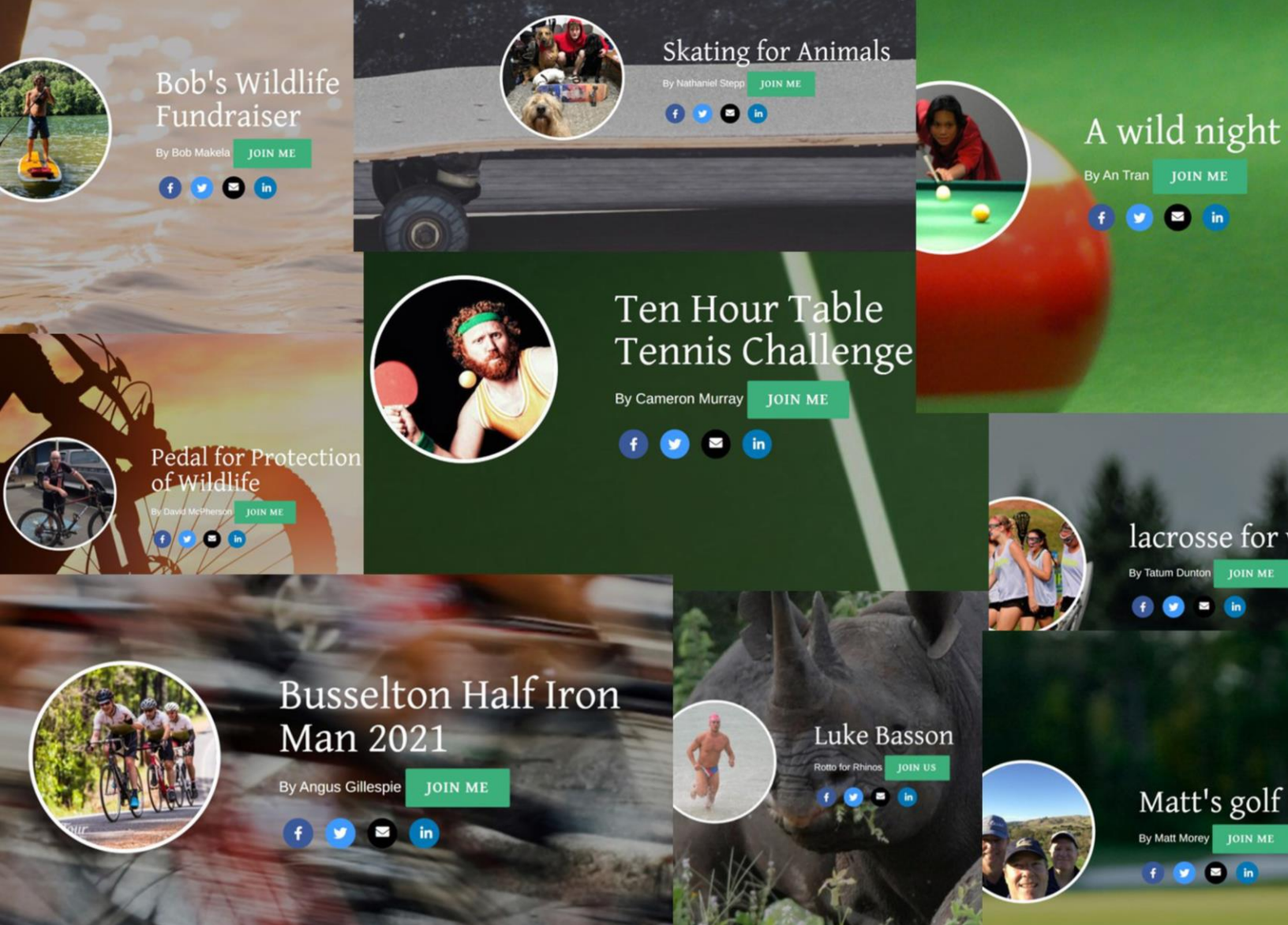
Once you have made this decision then, whatever your favorite sport or activity, harness your energy and drive to join the challenge to protect the world's remaining wildlife and their habitat.

We know that it is a challenge to live a balanced lifestyle; and now we all need to add to this the challenge of living in balance with wildlife and the

natural world. It isn't too late to address the risks of biodiversity loss. We simply need to decide, are we ready to accept the challenge of rehabilitating our planet, our home?

The **World Games For Wildlife** platform can be used by individuals who love to run, swim or head out for a bike ride. It can also be used for group fundraising activities, from golf to tennis, basketball and much more.





During the first 6 months of World Games For Wildlife, the type of events registered on the platform have included golf, table tennis, cycling, ocean swimming, pool and a half marathon.

Active for Animals is delighted that this event has got off to such a great start and we look forward to building it in the months and years to come.

To find out more, check out the website at www.worldgamesforwildlife.org



One Small Step Campaign

Active for Animals knows that we all live busy lives, which is why we will add ideas to the **One Small Step** campaign. These will be activities to help you take your first step into conservation and getting **Active for Animals**.

Become A Tiger Ambassador – Letter Writing Campaign

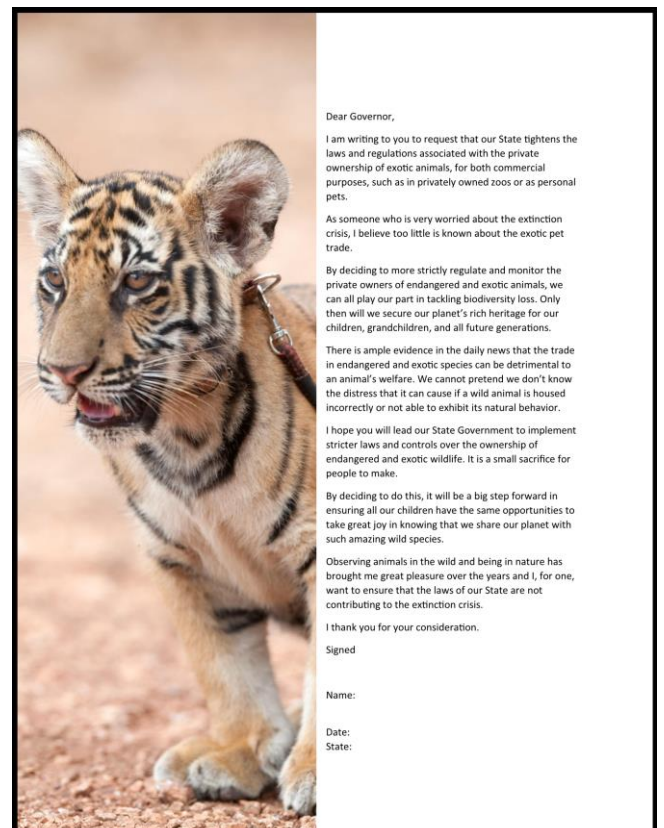
Expanding on **Active for Animals**' 'Rhino Ambassador' campaign, we have created a way for our supporters to take **one small step** to help tigers and all exotic animals that can be privately owned in the USA.

Undoubtedly, the Tiger King documentary has made more Americans aware of our country's lax regulations and ownership laws when it comes to exotic animals.

It is estimated more tigers live in captivity in the USA alone than the 4 thousand tigers left in the wild. The key word is **estimated**, because trade and ownership of exotic animals, including tigers, is opaque.

Which is why **Active for Animals** has created a letter for our supporters to send to their State Governor, requesting the laws and regulations about owning exotic animals, for commercial purposes or personal pets, be strengthened.

This will be an ongoing campaign for Active for Animals, as our research has shown that too few people are aware of the scale of exotic animal ownership in the USA.



Become a Shark Ambassador – Letter Writing Campaign

Inspired by a compelling letter from a marine biologist to the Chinese restaurant community, **Active for Animals** created a letter for supporters to download. The letter could be emailed, posted or dropped into any restaurant with shark fin soup on the menu.

Open Letter to Chinese Restaurants



Dear Chinese restaurants,

Shark fin soup. A traditional Chinese dish which is also famous worldwide. The simplicity of combining a shark's fin, chicken and ham broth.

I must admit, I truly admire how you find such bizarre ingredients which up making spectacular dishes. But the fact that you are killing an innocent species so cruelly, just to satisfy the same taste of human beings? Sounds unfair.

However, the purpose of this letter is not to applaud or praise you on the quality of your food, but to convince you why you should stop selling shark fin soup and how sharks are actually a good species.

A keystone species, a species on which other species in an ecosystem largely depend on, such that if they were removed, the ecosystem would change drastically. Sharks are a keystone species of healthy and diverse oceans. They feed on animals that are weak, sick and remain below them on the food chain. Therefore, sharks help maintain and control the balance of the marine ecosystems.

For example, from 1970-2000, the population of sharks such as the scalloped hammerhead and the tiger had decreased extensively from direct fishing pressure. From that, species like rays and skates (consumed by sharks) increased in population and overpopulated. The main diet of rays and skates were scallops, which means that they put an end to scallop fishery. This is called 'upsetting the balance' or a 'trophic cascade'. Other than that, the diet of a shark can vary, therefore, it allows them to switch prey whenever a population of species runs low. Hence, the sharks help balance the ecosystem and makes sure that no species get overpopulated. In other words, if you kill ONE shark, you're killing hundreds of other marine species.

Using a shark's fin in a bowl of soup as the 'main attraction of your theme park' doesn't quite make sense. Here's the reason, it's tasteless! It's purely cartilage! You're only using it for the firm jelly texture which can easily be made in the kitchen. Just substitute it with gelatin, pig's blood, vegetables, jellyfish... there are so many other options. So why not do that? In fact, shark fin soup is very unhealthy. The fin has a very high level of mercury and other dangerous toxin which are found in fish. The United States Environmental Protection Agency also advises women and young children to avoid ingesting it. Symptoms of mercury poisoning can cause harm to the brain, heart, kidneys, and immune system. Again, if you kill ONE shark, you don't only kill hundreds of other species, but you're also slowly killing yourself.

There are many things you could say about sharks. Like how they can bite off a huge chunk of your skin and swim away like nothing happened. However, what most people don't know, is that sharks normally don't attack humans. It's easy for them to mistake humans as their natural prey, such as seals, seals, and other fish. The most common shark attacks are provoked ones. These attacks occur when humans 'disturb' them. For example, some divers try to grab and pull a shark's fin, forgetting about the consequences they'll face.

At the end of the day, who really are the killers?

To sum everything up, sharks are the heart of the oceans. Sharks are a good species as they keep everything in balance. There are many times when people mistakenly think that sharks are bad and that they intend to kill humans. But everyone knows that that's not true.

After reading my letter I hope you agree to stop selling shark fin soup, along with not to harm or kill any species of sharks.

Respectfully,

A Marine Biologist



Dear Restaurant Owner,

I am writing to you to request that you remove shark fin soup from your menu.

I acknowledge that this is a traditional Chinese dish and at the same time I think that it is necessary for all humanity to reflect on any aspects of our cultural heritage that may now be driving the extinction crisis. By deciding to stop the consumption of key species, such as sharks, we can all play our part in tackling biodiversity loss. Only then will we secure our planet's rich heritage for our children, grandchildren, and all future generations.

There is ample evidence in the daily news that our collective indifference to the consumption of wildlife will result in a much more difficult world for our children. We can not pretend we didn't know that our actions today would impact the lifestyles of tomorrow. It is time to reflect on:

"We not only inherit the Earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children."

Sharks are a keystone species, a species on which many other species in an ecosystem depend on. By removing sharks, we are negatively impacting the ongoing health of our ocean ecosystems.

I urge to you to read the letter I have enclosed, written by a marine biologist. Her words are very powerful:

"The shark helps balance the ecosystem; if you kill ONE shark, you're killing hundreds of other marine species. Sharks are the heart of the oceans. These wonderful animals deserve our compassion. We are privileged to be their custodians and we must all take responsibility to ensure their survival in the wild."

I hope you agree to stop selling shark fin soup at your restaurant. Removing shark fin soup from your menu is such a small sacrifice to make. But deciding to do this will be a big step forward in ensuring all our children live the same prosperous lifestyle we have been privileged to enjoy.

I thank you for your consideration.

Signed

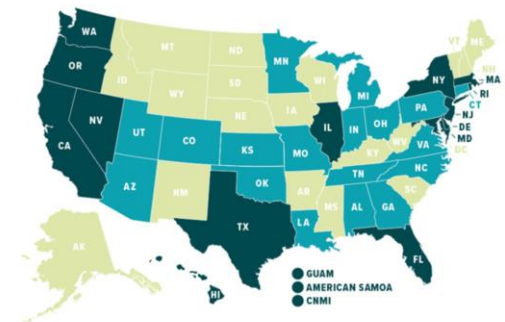
Name:

Date:
State:

What made this campaign easier to support is the fantastic work by the **Animal Welfare Institute** to compile a directory of restaurants currently offering shark fin in the United States.

One reason behind the **One Small Step Campaign** is outlined in the Shark Ambassador letter, namely that it is time to reflect on:

"We not only inherit the Earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children"



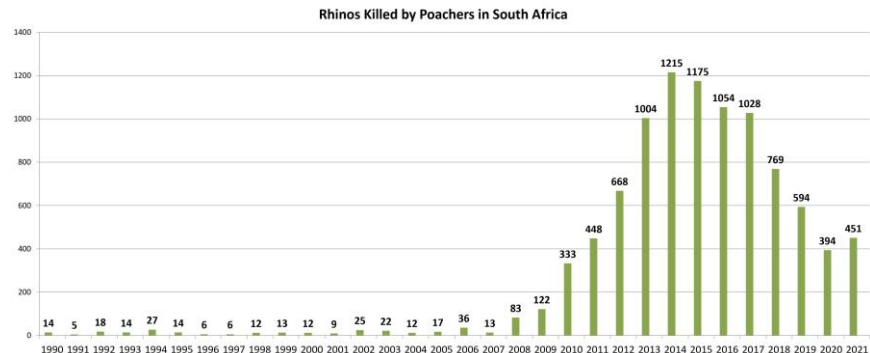
all blue: contains restaurant(s) serving shark fin soup
dark blue: bans sale or possession of shark fins
green: no data on restaurants serving shark fin soup

Rhino Poaching And Rhino Horn Demand

Rhino poaching figures are still tragically high, and the worrying trend is that for the first time in six years South Africa recorded an increase in rhino poaching statistics in 2021. In 2021, 451 rhinos were killed in South Africa alone.

Rhino poaching had dropped every year since its peak in 2014. This increase may be a result of the loss of livelihoods due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While some international travel restrictions have been eased, certainly the income from international tourism and

hospitality, on which countries in continental Africa depend, has been almost entirely cut off and will be slow to return. This has significant implications for rhino poaching and the security of all wildlife.



As for rhino horn demand, there is still no definitive research on how consumer demand has changed because of the pandemic. There is also insufficient research regarding any changes to a domestic government's tolerance of consumer demand for wild species, given both the tragic health implications and significant economic downturn linked to COVID-19. The global pandemic was zoonotic in origin and there is a growing recognition that people are vulnerable because the line between us and exotic animals is being increasingly breached for trade, both legal and illegal.

This could mean that consumers may be less interested in wildlife products in the future. It could also lead to governments being less tolerant of this trade and more willing to crack down on wildlife crime, given the world has now seen the potential of zoonotic diseases to cause serious disruptions.

It is still the intention of **Active for Animal's** that we conduct our own consumer research in Viet Nam as soon as travel becomes much less restricted. In the meantime, we are monitoring international research regarding changes to consumer desire for wildlife products and purchasing behavior as a result of the pandemic.



Financial Statement

Active for Animals is delighted that we earned a GuideStar 2021 Silver Seal of Transparency.

Active for Animals form 990 can be viewed on the IRS website as well as our Determination Letter.



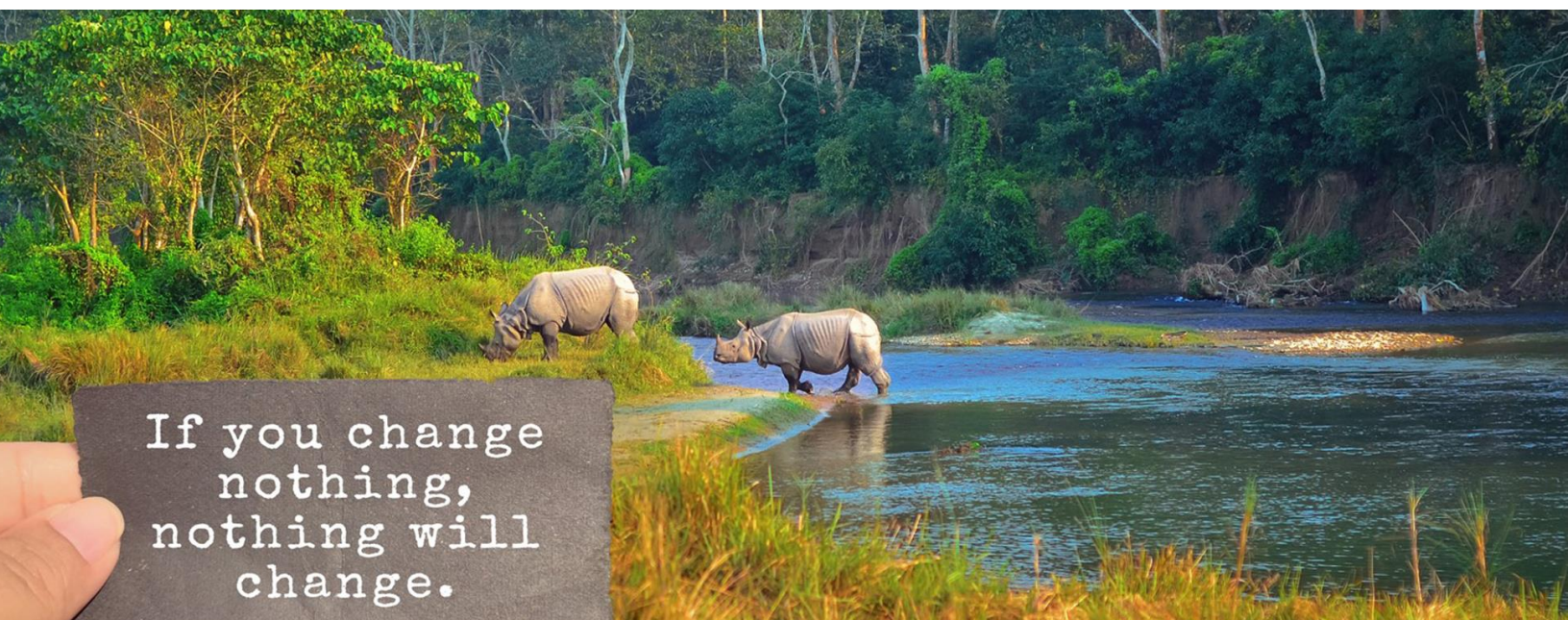
Active for Animals Accomplishments 2021 Included:

- Partnering with Nature Needs More and SAVE African Rhino Foundation to launch the **World Games For Wildlife**
- Expanding the **One Small Step Campaign**, to:
 - Stop the sale of shark fin soup in the USA, and
 - Tackle laws governing exotic animal ownership in the USA
- Earning the 2021 **Silver Star of Transparency from Guidestar**
- Continuing to build a supporter base in both the USA and Viet Nam.
- Educating **Active for Animal's** supporters about the need to re-examine our relationship with nature, based on biodiversity loss, climate change and the risks of emerging pandemics.

Active for Animals Goals for 2022 Include:

- Understanding how the domestic and international trade in wildlife has changed (or not) as a result of the global pandemic
 - This will specifically focus on any changes in the desire for rhino horn, post pandemic, to ensure future demand reduction campaigns remain relevant to the key consumer groups.
- When it is possible, a research tour of Viet Nam
- Strengthening **Active for Animals** ability to raise funds for key projects
- Building on USA campaigns, and develop a system to get people more involved

Active for Animals knows that it is a challenge to live a balanced lifestyle and now we all need to add to this the challenge of living in balance with wildlife and the natural world. Our aim is to support more people to take **One Small Step**.



Thank You

This work could not have been achieved without the support of a number of individuals and organizations. While this list is by no means exhaustive, given the people who have helped over the last year, **Active for Animals** would like to acknowledge the following:

1. Phuoc Phan and Anh Phan for their continued support to understand many aspects of Vietnamese culture, including the use of endangered species and specifically the desire for rhino horn. Your ongoing insights, advice and willingness to listen to **Active for Animals'** ideas has helped evolve our thinking and understanding of the best approach to tackle the demand for rhino horn in Viet Nam.
2. My lifelong friends, all of whom have listened and encouraged my passion, with many getting active for **World Games For Wildlife** and in the **One Small Step** initiatives.
3. Everyone who has donated to and supported **Active for Animals** throughout 2021.
4. Dr. Lynn Johnson, of Nature Needs More and Dr. Cameron Murray, of SAVE African Rhino Foundation, who I have enjoyed working with on the World Games For Wildlife Campaign.
5. I would also like to especially thank Dr Lynn Johnson for providing a vision and hope for seeing a world where humans and animals can thrive together.

As always, this work is dedicated to my wildlife loving daughters, Tatum and Drew, you both provide my inspiration and drive.

