

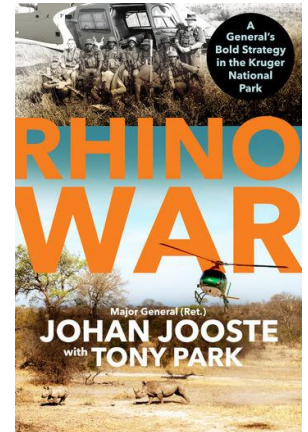


**Title** Rhino War  
**Author** Major Gen. (Ret.) Johan Jooste with Tony Parks  
**Published** June 5, 2022 by Ingwe Publishing  
**Review By** Peter Zonneveld  
**Review Date** December 2025



**Lessons For**  
 Directors, Prescribed Officers, Executives  
 Governance Officers, Company Secretaries  
 Ethics Officers, Risk Managers, Compliance Managers  
 Audit Professionals  
 Strategy Professionals  
 Line Managers

Relevance	Overall Rating
9	<b>6,8</b>
6	
8	
5	
7	
6	



## Synopsis

In his compelling account of the battle against poaching in the Kruger National Park (Kruger), Johan Jooste shows how governance, risk, and ethical decision-making in the field of conservation are intricately linked. With rhino poaching spiralling out of control, the author was tasked with fighting a seemingly unwinnable war of unprecedented assault on the rhino population in the park. The book delves into how criminal syndicates take advantage of weak institutions, political meddling, and corruption – to create an unstable system in which conservation efforts must either adapt or fail. Jooste does not treat poaching as a singular issue; instead, he looks at the larger socio-economic and security challenges that drive the poaching crisis, showing how an over-reliance on traditional enforcement tactics without considered structural reform can result in systemic failure. Drawing on his experience in the military, Jooste emphasises the difficulties in striking a balance between sustainability and compliance, showing that even well-funded interventions may fail in the absence of managing organisational ethics and values. His analysis emphasises how integrated and comprehensive community engagement, long-term strategic planning, and flexibility are crucial to preserving stability in the conservation industry. The book also explores the unexpected repercussions of an overly militaristic approach to conservation, where strict enforcement can occasionally cause the very systems that it seeks to safeguard to become unstable. Through an incredibly thorough narrative, Rhino War functions as a strategic manual and a warning story, demonstrating how intricate systems need varied solutions to avoid collapsing.

**Key Concept: Integrated Thinking** Active consideration of relationships between an entity's various operating and functional units and the capitals that it uses or affects.

**Quotes:** "This fight against poaching is not about an individual, and success depends on the collective collaboration and commitment from the men and women tasked with the responsibility of conserving our heritage." "One thing was clear: I needed to act decisively and swiftly and have the courage to take calculated risks. While I needed more information, there was no time for 'analysis paralysis'." "Threat/risk assessment of the future concept of operations, availability of sustained technology, and funding will all determine what and how many sensors are needed to protect wildlife in the years ahead."

## Practical Tips

- Be prepared to make tough decisions under pressure, balancing ethical responsibility with practical solutions.
- Develop strong partnerships with government, private sector, and communities to drive sustainable change.
- Ensure compliance frameworks are adaptable to real-world challenges and are enforced at all levels.
- Develop proactive risk strategies to counter internal and external threats.
- Recognise signs of corruption, inefficiency, and ethical breaches in an organisation's operations.
- Actively reach across functional governance, risk, ethics, compliance, and sustainability boundaries when collaborating in the best interest of the larger organisation that all these functions serve.

## Think About

- How can institutions create more transparent, accountable systems to prevent corruption?
- What role does leadership play in fostering a culture of ethical responsibility?
- How can mechanisms like whistleblower protection and independent audits strengthen governance?
- The fight against rhino poaching required military-style risk assessments, intelligence gathering, and rapid response strategies—methods that are also essential in corporate risk management.
  - How can organisations anticipate and mitigate emerging risks before they escalate into crises?
  - Which learnings can you adopt from SANParks' combating of well-funded organised crime?
  - How can organisations balance proactive and reactive risk management to safeguard their interests?
- How should leaders balance ethical principles with practical realities?
- In a world where financial, environmental, and social considerations often conflict, how can organisations ensure that ethical decision-making remains a priority?

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