

Khartoum, through customs at Sana'a airport. But annual imports have perhaps halved since 2008, to c. 25 kg of rhino horn in 2012. Yemen cannot compete with the higher prices offered in eastern Asia. Yemen's wholesale price for horn has remained stable since 2008 at USD 1,500 per kg. The left-over shavings sell illegally in Sana'a for USD 940 per kg, for the eastern Asian market. Vietnam and China are experiencing an economic boom, stimulating demand for the horn.

Yemen's economic crisis resulted in some Yemenis selling their valuable daggers with rhino horn handles, to pay for air passages to leave the country or simply to feed their families. Only the rich can now afford new rhino horn handles for their daggers and, unlike the former President, the new incumbent does not wear a *jambiya*. Moreover, many Yemenis in Sana'a no longer want to wear an expensive dagger on the street, for fear of it being stolen.

To help further reduce demand for new rhino horn, we produced billboards, banners, posters and stickers about the plight of the rhino. We posted these in the Sana'a zoo, and elsewhere in the city, including in shop windows and taxis. Apart from hostility from some sellers of rhino horn daggers in the souq, Yemenis welcomed us warmly, and were sympathetic.

With new rhino horn daggers less popular, Yemenis have been developing an alternative material for handles that is inexpensive yet closely resembles rhino horn. The handles are made of a gum with a mystery additive that looks like the grain seen in a rhino horn handle. This handle was first introduced in 2008, initially in China, we were told, and has been steadily improved by artisans in the Sana'a souq. Some Yemenis who will not wear cheap daggers with water buffalo horn handles (which are most commonly made) are happy to wear these new so-called Chinese daggers. Many people in Sana'a mistakenly believe they are still imported from China but they are actually being crafted in the souq, bringing much needed employment to artisans.

The time is ripe to expand the marketing of the new *jambiya*. We spoke with journalists in Sana'a who agreed that these new daggers need to be publicized with a more alluring name: dragon's horn (*qarn al tinnin*) has been recommended as it conjures up images of mystery, legend and power combined. Let us hope it catches on in a country ready to move on, with Yemenis seeking change and improvement in multiple ways.

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### Rediscovery of the supposedly extinct *Dipterocarpus cinereus*

Trees of the family Dipterocarpaceae are valued for their timber and resin. In Sumatra the family is represented by

eight genera and c. 109 species and six subspecies, of which at least 11 species are endemic. One of these endemics, *Dipterocarpus cinereus* Sloot., was categorized as Extinct on the IUCN Red List in 1998. According to Ashton (*Dipterocarpaceae*. Flora Malesiana, Series I, 92, 237–552) this species is only known from the c. 8,000 ha Mursala (= Morsala, Moesala or Mansalaar) Island in the District of Tapanuli Tengah in North Sumatra Province. It was first collected in 1916 by A.V. Theunissen and described by Dirk Fok van Slooten under the name *Dipterocarpus cinerea* in 1927. In 1982 Peter Ashton asserted its name to be *Dipterocarpus cinereus* Sloot.

With the support of the Government of Indonesia through the Indonesian Institute of Sciences, Bogor Botanic Gardens carried out an expedition during March–April 2013 to survey for a possible remnant population of *D. cinereus* on Mursala Island. After more than 2 weeks the team found *D. cinereus* in at least two localities. However, we found only three mature trees, and several seedlings that we believe to be of this species. According to local people *D. cinereus* is a species targeted for its timber, along with other dipterocarp species such as *Dryobalanops aromatica*, *Shorea* spp. and *Dipterocarpus caudatus* ssp. *penangianus*.

Bogor Botanic Gardens is now carrying out further studies on the genetic variability of *D. cinereus* and other dipterocarp species found on the island. With the collaboration of the local people we are also planning to collect the fruits of *D. cinereus*, for propagation and future restoration of the species in the wild. Mursala Island is currently managed as a protected forest by the local government but we recommend that it receives improved protection, through the Ministry of Forestry.

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### From research to responsible advocacy: the Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation finds common ground in Aceh, Indonesia

Dramatic losses of forest and biodiversity across the Asia-Pacific region are a great cause for concern. The region's tropical ecosystems are under immense pressures, be it from conversion to exotic plantations in Indonesia and Malaysia or intense demand for wildlife products in Vietnam and China. The fragmentation and disturbance of natural vegetation by proliferating road networks and other infrastructures is seriously affecting many sensitive species, especially those that are slow-reproducing, large-bodied or range-restricted. Such changes are already altering