

The Vicious Circle of Systematic Poaching in the Context of the Information Phenomenon:

Principles, Solutions and Prospects

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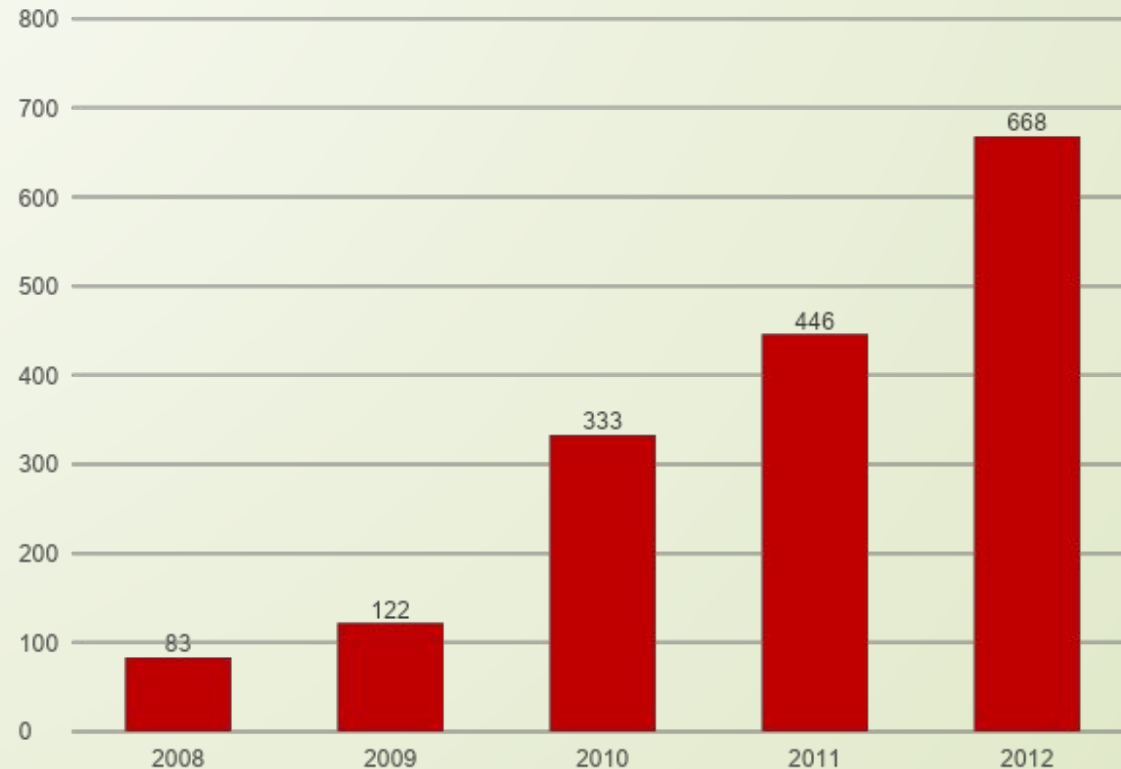
Principal key points:

By the unpretentious term "poaching", we usually mean the illegal catching or destruction of animals and plant materials that are prohibited to catch, without having the proper authorisation, using illegal or prohibited equipment and methods. Although in recent years, largely under the influence of the information phenomenon, the definition of "legalised poaching" emerged, implying the actual destruction of biological diversity, which is covered by the rule of law and tolerated based on these facts.

One should distinguish between sporadic and systematic (economically conditioned) poaching. The first is characterised by single manifestations of violations, such as those pertaining to hunting regulations that are not motivated by material gain. The second makes this "business" flow, the basis and purpose for which is making a profit from the sale of illegally harvested products. We shall consider the latter phenomenon separately.

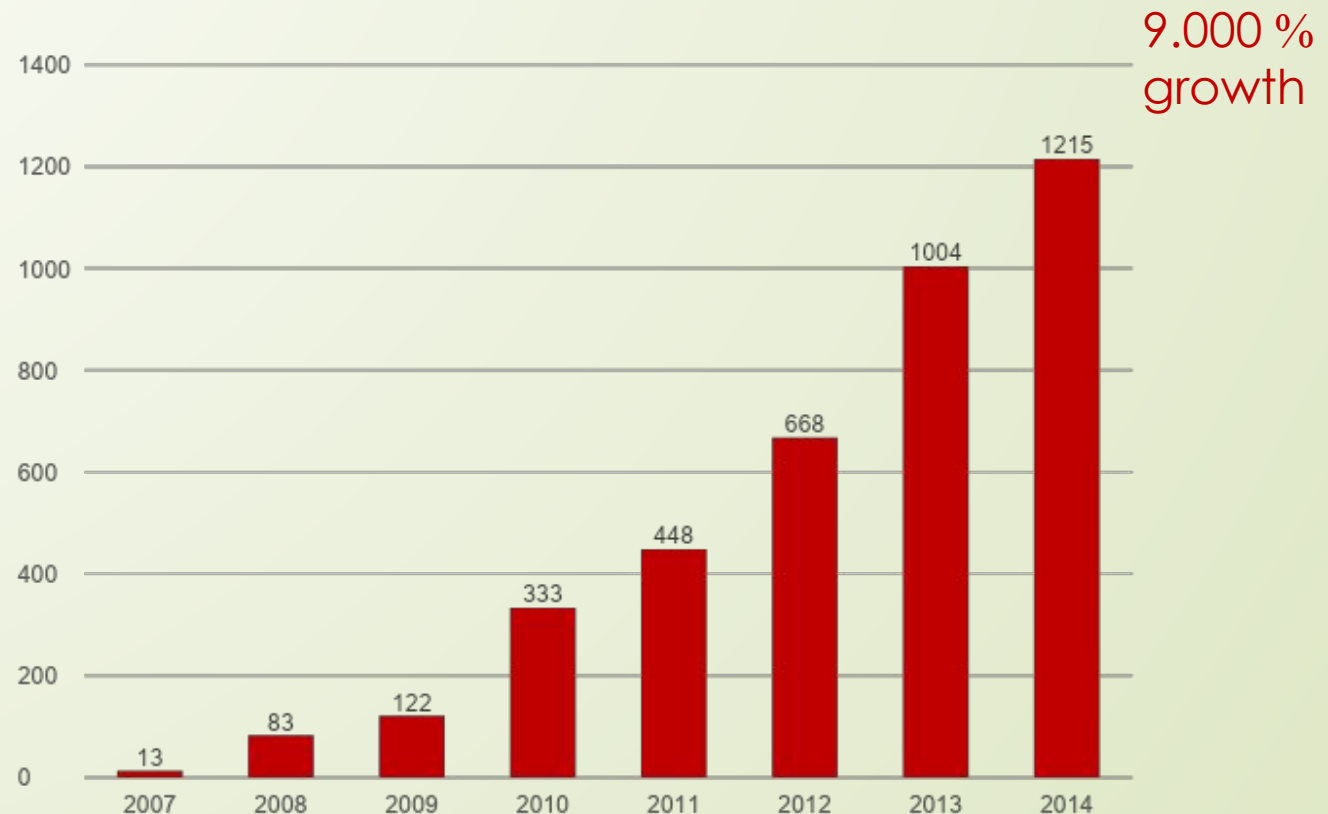
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Number of rhinoceros killed by poachers in South Africa (2008 – 2012) [from Possingham, H. P. Legal Trade of Africa's Rhino Horns / H. P. Possingham // Science. – 2013. – 1 March. – Vol. 339. – Iss. 6123. – P. 1038 – 1039.]



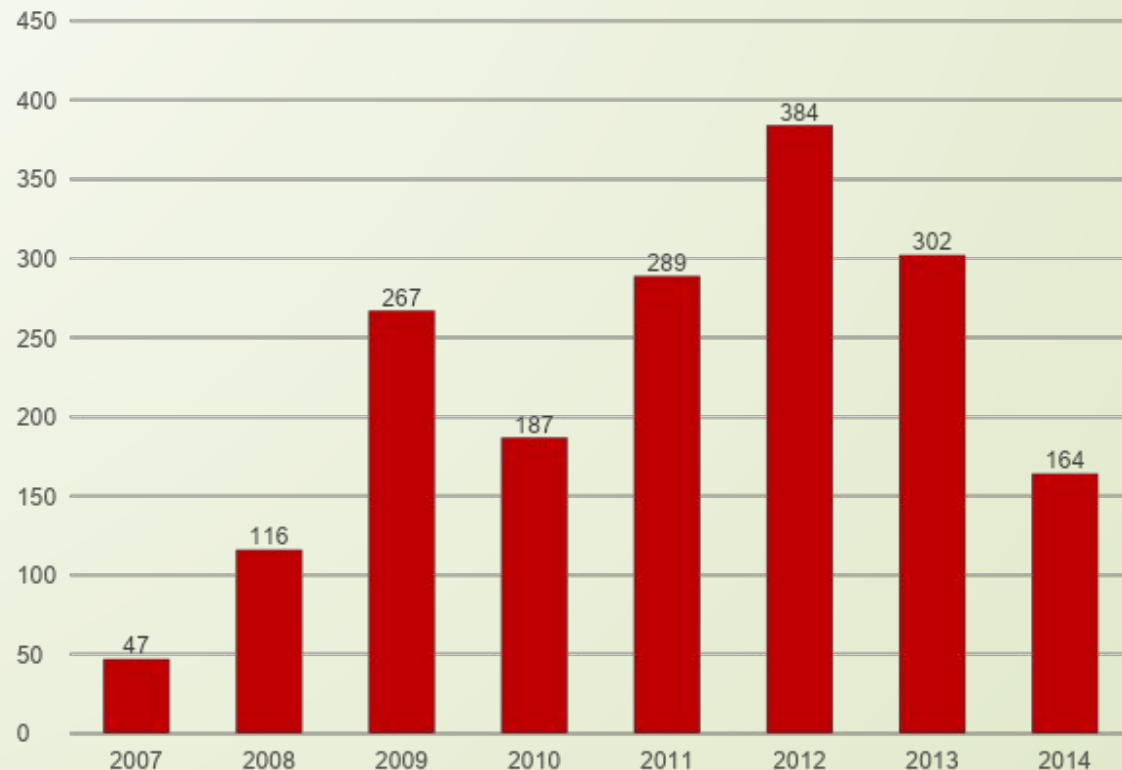
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Number of rhinoceros killed by poachers in South Africa (2007 – 2014) (Published by South African Department of Env. Affairs) [from web: <https://www.savetherhino.org>]



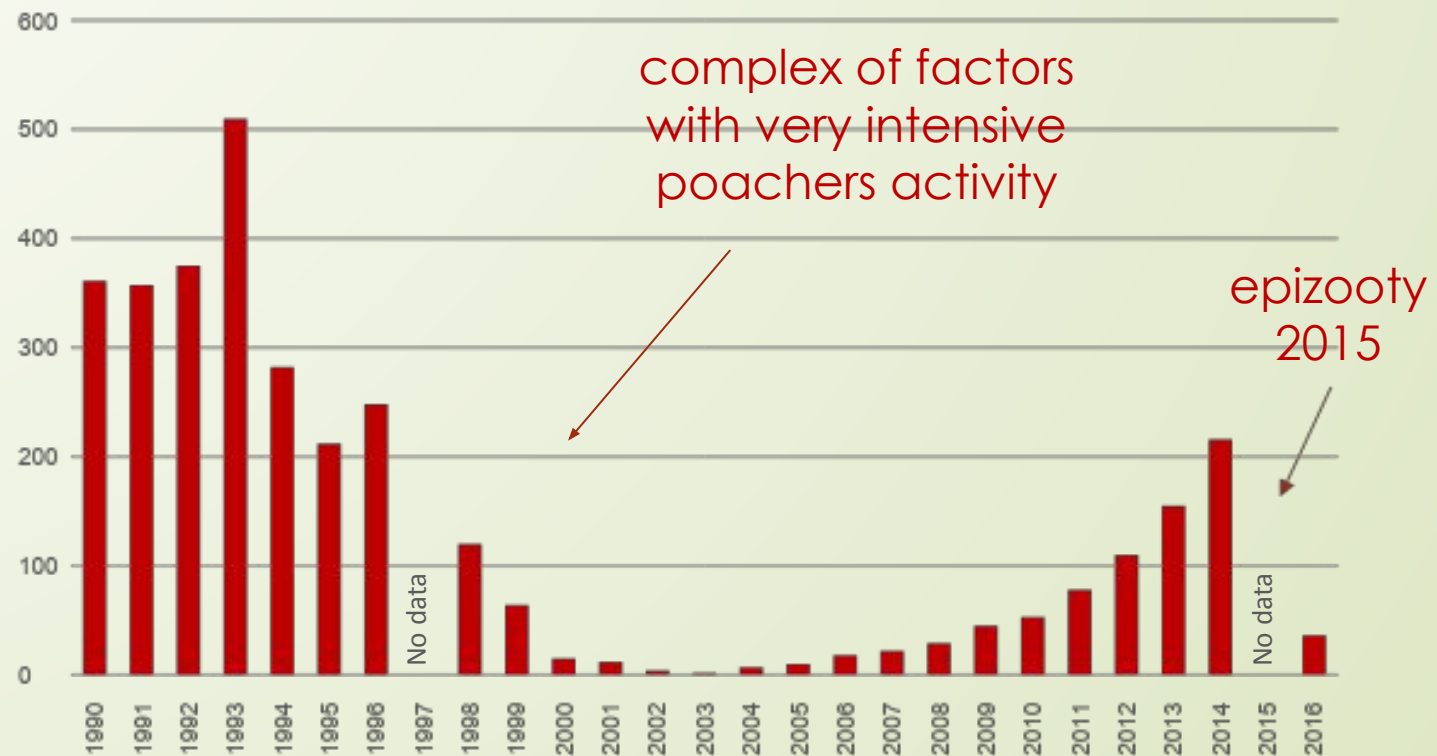
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Elephant poaching in Kenia (2007 – 2014) (Source: Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) annual reports) [from web: <http://www.traffic.org>]



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Dynamics of Betpakdala population of Saiga antelope (*Saiga tatarica tatarica*) (1990 – 2016) (Source: Association for the Conservation of Biodiversity of Kazakhstan – ACBK).



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But how does the system itself, which is leading to such reckless and irresponsible approach to the living world, look?

To take a look a more comprehensive look at the emerging picture, it seems logical to understand and figure out the mechanism of this phenomenon. The mechanism for this is economic in nature.



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Demand creates supply – this simple formula is the basis and starting point for the development of systematic poaching. Supply and demand dynamics then form somewhat of a cycle that leads to the development of this system. It looks as follows:

I. The emergence of demand for some products



→ II. The appearance of supply and the destruction of specimens of the living world



III. A reduction in the number of harvested species



IV. The growth in prices for such products



← V. An increase in poaching (in both absolute and relative terms) due to the high price of these products

5 key steps of the Vicious Circle

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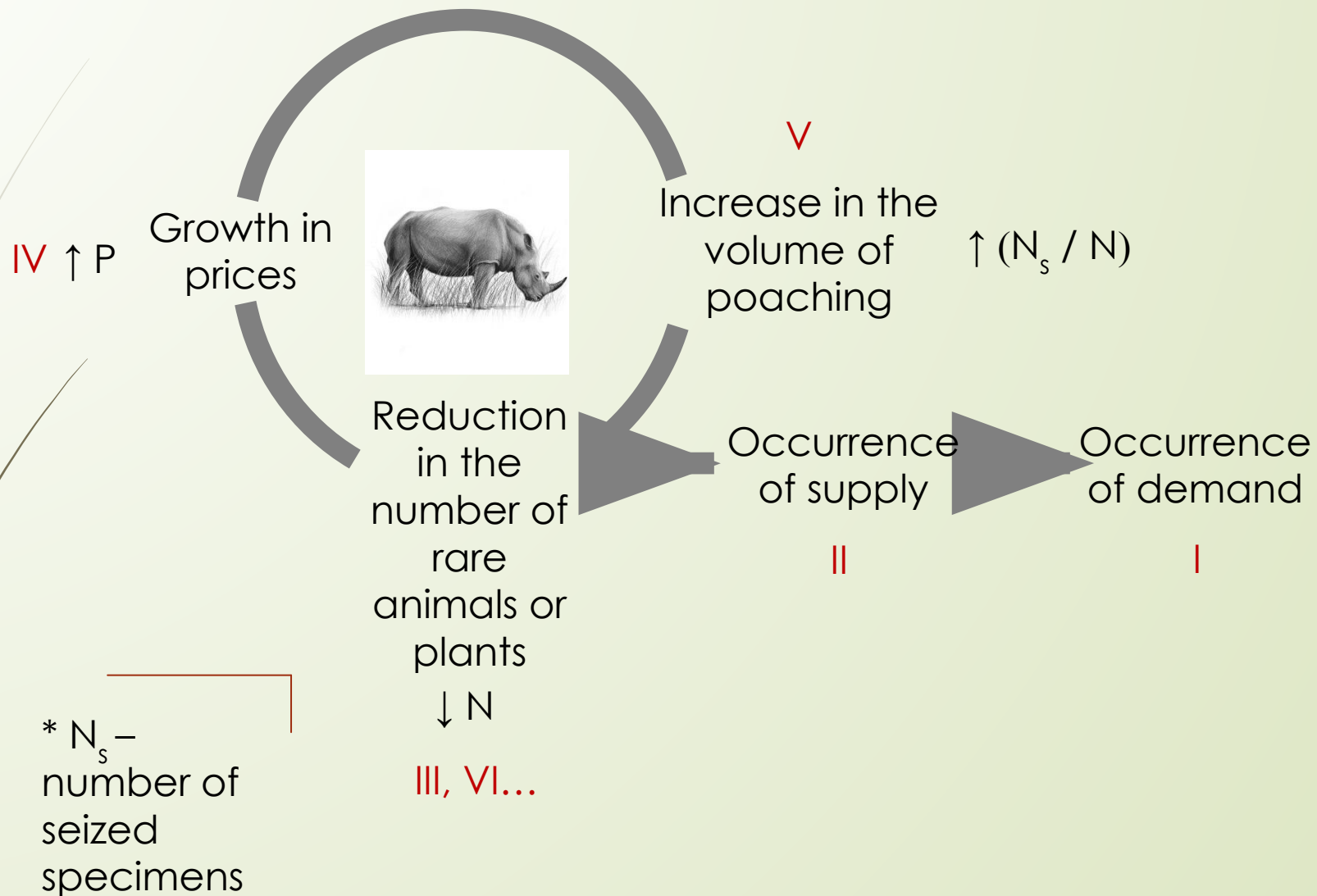


Fig.1. The vicious circle of systematic poaching

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For example, the reduction in the number of illegally harvested species and the subsequent increase in the prices of poaching products actively supports demand for them. After all, the more expensive and rare something is, the more "valuable" and prestigious it becomes in many people's opinion. In view of the information phenomenon, the "law of demand" is quite capable of changing its character. In this case, the vicious cycle becomes more complicated, including additional links...



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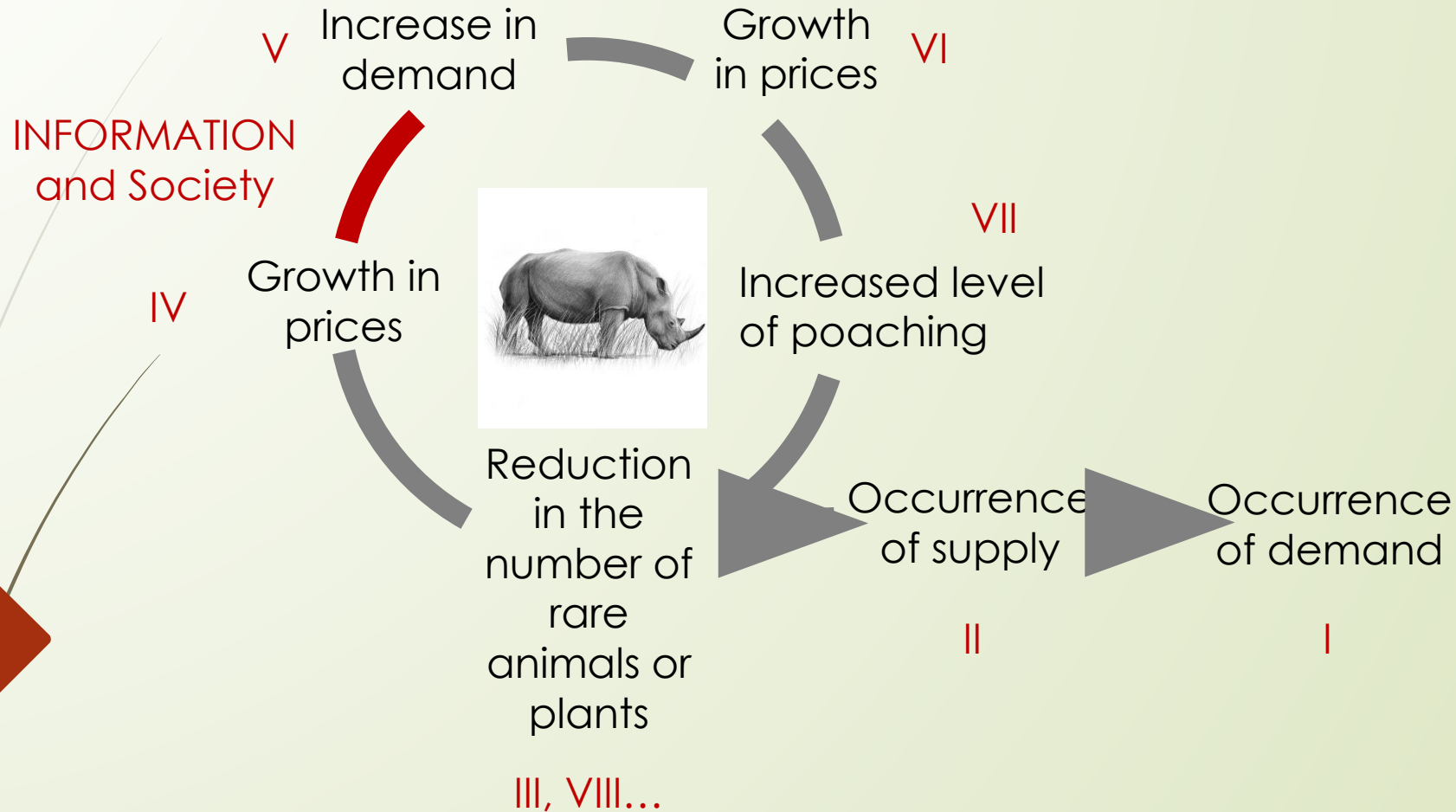


Fig. 2. The vicious circle of systematic poaching in the context of the information phenomenon

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All measures are capable of breaking the vicious circle, which is centred around two basic approaches, which can be characterised as "soft" and "hard". The first is aimed at combating the neutralisation of demand, and the second is aimed at suppressing supply...



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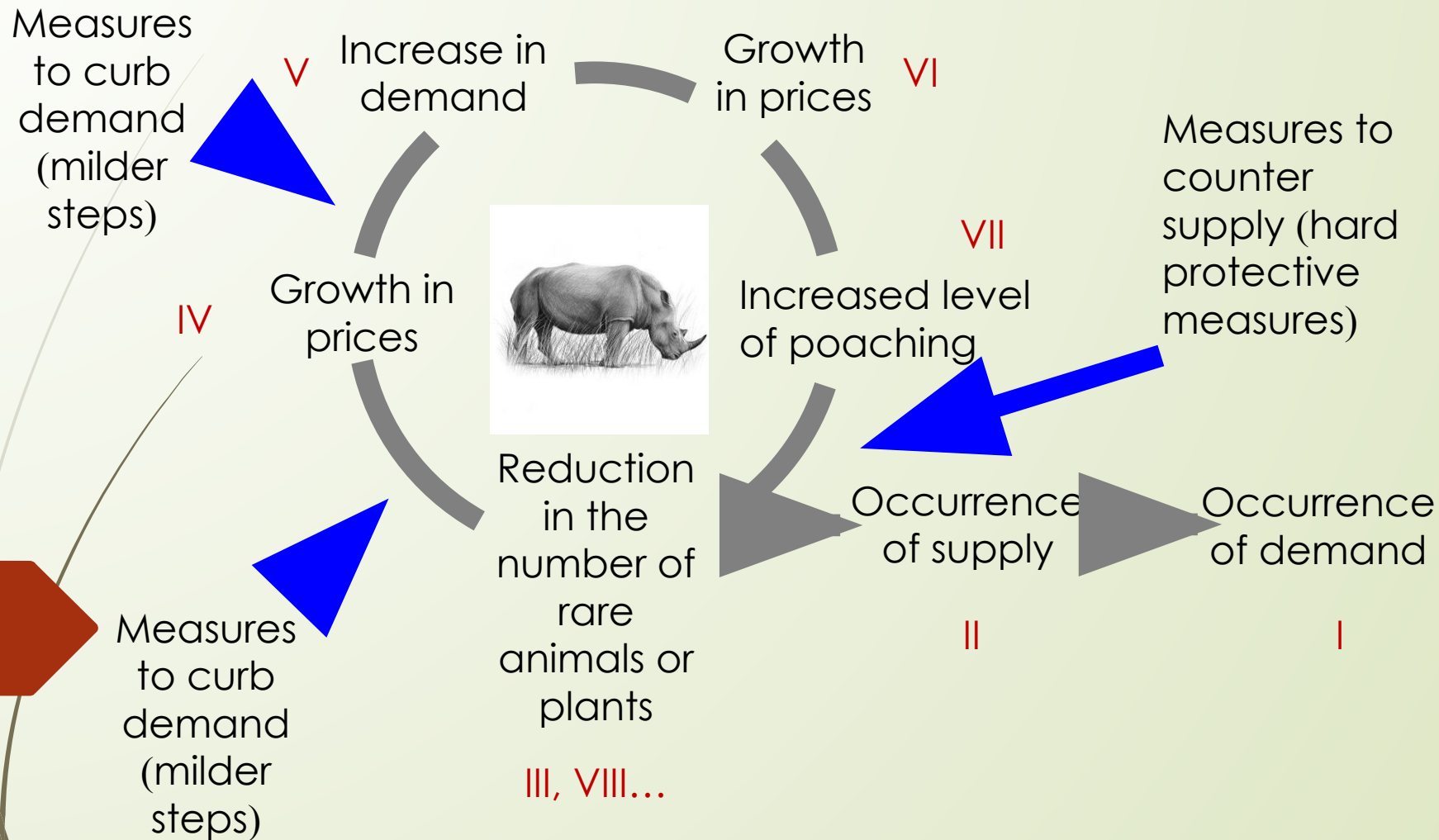


Fig 3. The main directions of breaking the cycle of systemic poaching (counter-measures and their application in modern situation)

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CONCLUSION:

But how can existing soft measures fundamentally manifest themselves. What are they based on? What can successfully opposed the existence of ruthless demand? This can only be done through ethical understanding. More specifically, understanding that entails having a careful and responsible attitude towards nature.

Perhaps, the decisive role here is in the area of **ethical perception**, suggesting that ethics play an invaluable role as a phenomenon capable of solving a variety of problems. **Together with the information phenomenon**, the phenomenon of ethical perception is theoretically capable to overcome demand, i.e. to eliminate the basis of the threat, which manifests itself in the form of systematic poaching.

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I understand, that I didn't say nothing new on the problem of systematic poaching in our World.

But I think that I must say this short report for the Congress. I sure, that we must say about this problem again and again, on and on, because our time give an very difficult examination for our society today.

... Will we pass this examination? And what we can do?

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