

## Two more black rhinos killed

News - National | 2014-05-22

by Staff Reporter



**POACHERS have struck again in the Kunene region where the carcasses of two black rhinos were found in the Palmwag concession early this week.**

This is the second poaching incident in the area in barely a month and it brings the number of rhinos killed by poachers this year to six.

The Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET), condemned the poaching yesterday afternoon.

In a press statement released shortly after the news broke out, permanent secretary Simeon Negumbo warned the poachers that Namibia's "security apparatus is ready to confront whoever takes part in these barbaric activities and they will face the full wrath of the law".

Negumbo said the latest poaching incident had prompted the tightening of security measures in place, although he did not elaborate on this.

Several members of the MET and special police forces from the Protected Resources Unit (PRU) were reportedly at the scene.

The two carcasses were found stripped of their horns and MET has confirmed the rhinos were a mother and her grown calf, although their exact ages have not been confirmed.

Negumbo further condemned the "ill intentioned activities and illegal plundering of wildlife" and called on those involved "to stop these selfish activities immediately".

The two carcasses were found on Saturday, 17 May, close to the area in which another black rhino was gunned down in late April.

No arrests have been made in both cases, neither have any horns been recovered. Investigations are ongoing.

This latest poaching brings the total number of rhinos poached in Namibia so far this year to six, compared to four last year, according to a report by Colgar Sikopo, the head of the MET Directorate of Regional Services and Parks Management, at a wildlife workshop early this month.

It also brings the total number of poaching incidents since 2011 to 13, according to the MET statistics.

The news of the poaching came on the day of an anti-poaching protest held in Windhoek and the continuation of the bail hearing of three Chinese nationals accused of the illegal possession of 14 rhino horns and a leopard skin. DNA tests have shown all the rhino horns stem from Namibia.

The MET has urged the public to be on alert for any suspicious activity in their areas, and to use the Rhino toll-free SMS line to send information that might be helpful to the investigation. As the rhino horns are still in possession of the poachers, any information that will help investigators retrieve the horns and arrest the poachers will be valuable.