



First black rhino poached in Etosha this year

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A black rhino has been killed and dehorned in the Etosha National Park, the first confirmed poaching incident in a national park this year. Minister of Environment and Tourism, Uahekua Herunga, yesterday confirmed that the carcass was found with 10 gunshot wounds and that the horn was removed. He said the ministry was alerted on Tuesday and currently there is not much information, as investigations are still ongoing at the scene. The rhino carcass was discovered in the southwest part of Etosha on Tuesday with its horn hacked off. The police and ministry officials were immediately informed. "This is a very sad story," Herunga said, referring to the fact that a rhino was killed in the Etosha National Park. The majority of the country's black rhino is found in Etosha. Herunga said the end beneficiaries of poaching are those who live outside the country.

However, it is the Namibian people who are feeding them information about where to locate rhinos. "This has to be stopped. We are searching for the culprits and they will be in serious trouble when we find and arrest them." He also urged those Namibians who are providing information to poachers to stop doing so. He asked anyone with valuable information on the whereabouts of the culprits to come forward. Namibia recently announced it will start dehorning black rhinos in its national parks and conservation areas, in an effort to curb poaching. The total number of poached rhino carcasses for this year alone is 15, while between 2005 and the end of last year Namibia had lost fewer than 10 rhinos.

WINDHOEK ELLANIE SMIT



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