



Namibia, Angola should join forces against poachers

09 March 2015 | Environment

A parliamentary standing committee has urged the ministries of Justice and Home Affairs to initiate an extradition agreement with the government of Angola to combat cross-border wildlife crimes effectively. Poaching has become a serious problem in Namibia, particularly in the Kunene Region, where poachers appear to operate with impunity. The Kunene Region borders southern Angola. So far this year, 14 rhino carcasses and 33 elephant carcasses have been found in Namibia. "There appears to be syndicates operating in Southern Africa which fuel the demand and are willing to pay high prices for wildlife products, including rhino horns, said Ben Amathila, the chairperson of the Standing Committee on Economics, Natural Resources and Public Administration. Tabling a report on poaching in Namibia in the National Assembly on Wednesday, he called on the

Ministry of Mines and Energy to consult regional authorities and local communities before allowing mining activities in wildlife breeding areas. He also called on the Ministry of Environment and Tourism to accelerate the drafting of the legislative framework to prevent the escalation of poaching in Namibia. "The National Assembly should support by realising changes to existing legislative framework to bring about more effective prevention of poaching of wildlife, Amathila said. He noted that after a consultative meeting last year with the Legal Assistance Centre in Windhoek, the committee decided to have a public meeting at Wereldsend in the Sesfontein Constituency of the Kunene Region. The meeting took place on August 11, 2014. The parliamentary group consisted of Katuutire Kaura, Simson Tjongarero, Ndaningaweni Protasisus Nghileendele and Carol-Ann Esterhuizen. The meeting was aimed at creating community awareness of the economic, social and environmental impacts of illicit trafficking in wildlife products and to enhance the protection of endangered species such as the rhino. It also encouraged residents to report illegal activities related to wildlife trade to the appropriate authorities. WINDHOEK NAMPA



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