

More than 30 rhino carcasses discovered in Etosha last week

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THE Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) said on Friday that a total of 31 rhino carcasses were discovered in the Etosha National Park during the course of last week.

Most of the carcasses were found in the western part of Etosha.

Permanent Secretary in the MET, Simeon Negumbo said this in a media statement made available to Nampa here on Friday afternoon.

The rhino carcasses were discovered from 8 April this year with some being old, while others still have horns.

According to Negumbo, the officials of the MET together with members of the Namibian Police Force (NamPol) are now busy conducting some thorough investigations to determine whether all 31 rhinos were poached or some died of natural causes.

“The current levels at which our rhinos are being killed illegally in the country needs to be rapidly brought under control. In doing so, the MET will continue to strengthen its efforts in effective crime prevention and law enforcement through coordinated and integrated clusters of activities, such as security planning, monitoring, adaptive management and a strong and effective presence on the ground,” Negumbo explained.

He further said that his ministry is in the process of having some dedicated investigation units that will mainly be focusing on criminal and poaching syndicates, and organised crime.

These units, said Negumbo, will work hand-in-hand with NamPol, the Namibian Defence Force (NDF), the Judiciary, Namibia's intelligence service, communities and farmers living in the vicinity of the Etosha National Park and other important stakeholders.

Issuing a stern warning, Negumbo said: “We once again condemn such ill-intentioned activities of rhinos and elephant poaching, and we call upon all those involved to refrain from such activities with immediate effect or risk of being caught and face the full wrath of the Namibian law”.

-Nampa

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