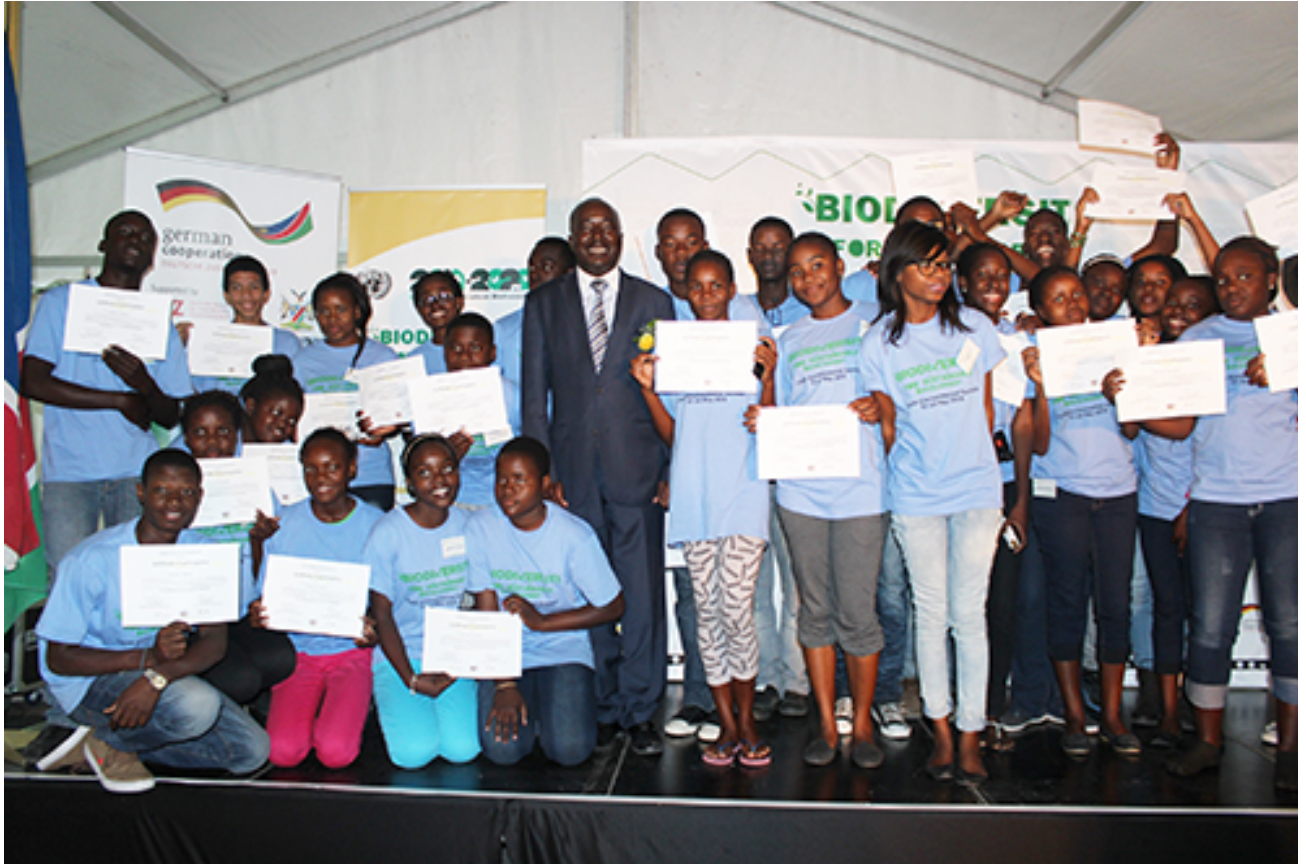


Nambahu shames poachers

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by Tuyeimo Haidula



POACHERS should be ashamed of themselves for killing innocent animals, said deputy minister of environment and tourism Tommy Nambahu.

Just a week ago, Nambahu explained that the ministry was aware that local people are being used in the poaching of elephants and rhinos.

“Shame on them for doing what they are doing to innocent animals. I have never heard of a rhino destroying a mahangu field or killing anyone. Why must it be killed because someone wants its parts?” he asked.

He was speaking at an occasion to mark the International Day for Biological Diversity, which was held under the theme “biodiversity for sustainable development” at Waterberg Plateau Park over the weekend.

The event, which hosted about 30 Grade 11 pupils, was organised by the ministry of environment and tourism, the Gobabeb research and training centre, the Namibian environmental education network, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the German Agency for International Cooperation.

It is aimed at educating young Namibians on how to become key agents for sustainable development.

Nambahu used the event to denounce poachers and urged his audience to reject them too. He also urged local people to avoid being used by poachers, saying they should instead protect wild animals which are Namibia's heritage.

"This is our country and we do not have a spare one. We must create awareness for those who think it is fashionable to poach animals because of greed and selfishness," he advised.

The Environmental Investment Fund (EIF) last week gave two Toyota Land Cruiser vehicles to the environment ministry and NamPol to be used for anti-poaching activities in and around the Etosha National Park and Kunene region.

Namibia has so far been trying to combat poaching, with the environment ministry increasing the reward money for whistle-blowers from N\$30 000 to N\$60 000.

Tourism minister Pohamba Shifeta said government would rely on anyone who has information on poaching incidences to come forward as one of its efforts to put an end to the increasing illegal activities.

The ministry and police are carrying out post-mortems on all rhino carcasses found so far. Six suspects have been arrested in connection with poaching in the northern parts of the country.

Two white rhino carcasses discovered on a farm in the Otjozondjupa region last weekend increased the losses through poaching in Namibia to 62 rhinos this year. Of these 54 were discovered in the Etosha National Park.

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