



Poaching rate triples

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Namibia has already lost three times the number of rhinos in 2015 compared to that of last year. A total of 77 rhinos and 37 elephants have been poached so far this year. This was confirmed by the Director of Parks and Wildlife Management in the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Colgar Sikopo on Friday. Namibia has experienced a sharp increase in cases of rhino poaching over the past five years. Namibia lost one rhino to poaching in 2009 and 2010 respectively; two rhinos were illegally killed in 2012, four in 2013 and 25 last year. The latest rhino poaching incident was reported last week in the Purros Conservancy northwest of Palmwag, about 60 km from Sesfontein. A carcass of a black rhino bull was discovered with five gunshot wounds and its horns hacked off and removed. The police are still investigating the case and no arrests have been made. Of the 77 rhinos poaching incidents reported this year the majority occurred in the Etosha National Park. Some of the carcasses found in Etosha this year were however old, and could therefore be the remains of animals that were killed before the start of 2015. The second phase of the anti-poaching operation in the Etosha National Park and the Palmwag Conservancy under the command of the Kunene Police Commissioner James Nderura started in September and will run until the end of November. The first operation started on June 1 and ended at the end of August, netting 48 suspected rhino poachers with about 32 firearms that were confiscated. The ministry offers rewards of N\$60 000 for information that will lead to the arrest and prosecution of poachers. ELLANIE SMIT



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