



Poachers strike at Otjiwa Game Ranch

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Barely a month into the new year, the first rhino poaching in Namibia has been reported.

When photos of yet another rhino killed by poachers were posted on Facebook yesterday the news spread like wildfire and the international and Namibian community expressed outrage about the ongoing problem and urging the government to take action.

This time a white rhino was shot and left for dead at Otjiwa Game Farm near Otjiwarongo. The poachers did not get away with the horn, but it was removed post-mortem.

According to the owner, WP Barnard, it is suspected that the rhino was killed at the weekend.

He said they found the carcass of the rhino cow on Monday afternoon at 16:00 after searching for her for several days.

Barnard said the rhino had an eight-month-old calf. After not seeing her for several days they started searching the area and found the calf about ten metres from its dead mother.

Barnard said it appeared that the cow was wounded and managed to get away from the poachers before dying.

It is uncertain when exactly she was shot and when she died.

"We searched for her for about three days," he said.

He express sadness over the loss of the animal and added that the calf was receiving special attention and care.

By yesterday afternoon investigations were continuing at the scene.

The police spokesperson for the Otjozondjupa Region, Warrant Officer Maureen Mbeha, confirmed that the police were investigating the case.



(<https://d3rp5jatom3eyn.cloudfront.net/asse-strike-at-otjiwa-game-ranch2017-01-250.jpg>)

SAD LOSS: Owner at Otjiwa Game Ranch, WP Barnard, with the rhino carcass that was discovered on Monday.

Barnard said the farm had not had any problems with poaching in recent years. One rhino was poached there in 1994 and two more in 2006.

Statistics released by the environment ministry showed that 63 rhino were killed in 2016, 91 in 2015, and 61 in 2014. This is the first poaching for 2017.

A N\$10 000 reward has been offered for information leading to the arrest of the poachers.