

Seven arrested for rhino poaching

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TWO rhino carcasses were discovered in the Kunene and Erongo regions, bringing the number of poached rhinos to 26 in 2017, said the environment ministry yesterday.

According to a ministerial statement, a fresh rhino carcass was discovered in the Klip River area in the Kunene region on Friday.

Three suspects were arrested during investigations by ministry officials and the police. The ministry said "aerial patrols and strategic roadblocks were initiated in the area and led to the arrest of four more suspects, who we believe poached the rhino. The four suspects were found in possession of a pair of fresh rhino horns".

All six suspects are Namibian citizens, with one of them a school teacher.

In the other suspected poaching incident in the Erongo region, a black rhino carcass was discovered on Okozongoro farm. However, no arrests have been made so far, while investigations continue.

"Investigations in both cases continue, and the ministry reiterates our appeal to the public to continue assisting us and the police by reporting any suspected rhino or elephant poaching incidents," the ministerial statement read, adding that poachers should be warned that "our anti-poaching teams, comprising staff of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, the Namibian Police and the Namibian Defence Force, are deployed in all [affected] areas".

The statement also said 18 elephants have been killed by poachers so far this year.