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## Environment ministry receives donation for Canine Unit

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by [Arlana Shikongo](#)

DONATION ... Standard Bank's Vetumbuavi Mungunda hands over a new land cruiser to tourism minister Pohamba Shifeta. Photo: Contributed.

**THE Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism today received a donation of a vehicle and veterinary drugs for the ministry's Canine Unit, aimed at supporting anti-poaching efforts.**

The two donations were made by Standard Bank and Swavet, MDS Animal Health and the Rhino Park Private Hospital, at a handover ceremony hosted in Windhoek today.

"This donation comes at a time when the country is faced with the impact of Covid-19 which is a global health pandemic. Tourism, which is the principal economic force for wildlife conservation, and which pays for the conservation protection costs, is particularly hard hit," environment minister Pohamba Shifeta said during the ceremony.

Shifeta said emphasis has been directed towards the law enforcement component of conservation over the past five years in an effort to protect the country's natural resources from illegal hunting.

He detailed that various tools have been utilized to curb the poaching of specially endangered species such as rhino, elephant and pangolin,

which he says are particularly sought after by poaching syndicates due to the value of their products.

One of these tools is the employment of anti-poaching canines which offer a combination of detection, tracking and apprehension capabilities, he said.

"From a detection perspective, all four dogs [in the Canine Unit] are trained to search buildings, vehicles, baggage and open areas for firearms, ammunition and illegal wildlife products such as ivory, rhino horn, pangolin scales and bush meat.

"All four dogs are also capable of tracking human scent and associated disturbance from start to finish over a variety of different terrains during day and night," Shifeta said.

Standard Bank donated a Toyota Land Cruiser Double Cab that will be used for patrols by the Canine Unit, while veterinary institutions donated drug and food for the dogs.

"We will continue to work with you to ensure that the dogs are health and well taken care of, and that our wildlife is protected," Shifeta said.

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