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Twenty-two rhinos and two elephants poached so far this year: MEFT

Twenty-two rhinos and two elephants have been killed by poachers thus far in 2020, the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Environment has said.

A report issued on Monday by the ministry's spokesperson, Romeo Muyunda, said 46 rhinos and 13 elephants were poached in 2019, while in 2018, 78 rhinos and 27 elephants were poached.

"Even though our rhino population is still healthy, we may end up with no rhinos at one point as they continue to be poached," Muyunda stressed.

He noted that the number of poached rhinos is significantly decreasing year by year due to the efforts of the anti-poaching unit. However, it is a collective effort for both government and the public to see an end to rhino and elephant poaching, he said.

Muyunda said Namibia has a population of more than 24 000 elephants, while the number of rhinos cannot be disclosed due to security reasons.

According to the weekly wildlife crime report between 07 September and 13 September 2020, 19 suspects were arrested for possessing controlled wildlife products, such as eland, warthog and steenbok carcasses, as well as pangolin skins.

The suspects were all charged with contravening the Controlled Wildlife Products Act of 2008 as amended, Act 6 of 2017, by respective magistrate's courts in the towns where their arrests took place during the period under review.

"For all the cases registered, the arrests or seizures were made by a combination of law enforcement agencies – the Namibian Police Force, Namibian Defence Force, Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism and private agencies," the statement noted.

Source: Namibia Press Agency

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