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24 November 2020 | [Nature & Environment](#)

Poaching is a cause for concern

Farmers around Usakos and Karibib need to be vigilant

For months, farmers in the areas of Usakos and Karibib have been fighting against a particularly high number of poaching cases - the extent is described as alarming and the private anti-poaching unit works almost around the clock. The police are investigating the extent.



A zebra was found in a tin trap on the Gamikaub farm - the animal died of the injuries. Photos: private



Cases of poaching in Usakos and Karibib counties have increased over the past few months and farmers are urged to be vigilant.

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By Erwin Leuschner, Swakopmund / Usakos

The anti-poaching unit K-SAPU APU (Kühne Security and Anti Poaching Unit) has now published several reports on the extent of poaching. The owner of the company, Butzi Kühne, could not be reached yesterday for a conversation because he was on the trail of cattle thieves on a farm.

Last week, however, Kühne described poaching as worrying. Large game such as zebras are particularly sought after, which get tangled in wire loops or tin traps and die miserably in the veld. "The COVID-19 pandemic has probably contributed to this," said Kühne. And: "Many Namibians have lost their jobs and are hungry, which is why there is an increased need for meat."

According to one of his reports, he was looking for poachers on the Gamikaub farm last week. He and his team scoured the farm and on the first day discovered 17 wire snares and tin traps and a zebra that had also been slaughtered. On the second day he discovered another zebra that was entangled in a wire loop but was still alive. But it died from the injuries. "We removed a total of 25 snares and hope that no other animals will be injured," says Kühne.

At the weekend he was back in action, this time on the Dorstrivier farm south of Usakos. Poachers slaughtered an oryx there - but they did not walk, but drove a vehicle through a total of three farm gates. "Only the head and intestines of the oryx were found," says Kühne. With his team he traced the vehicle tracks. Ultimately, the track on the road was lost, but he suspects that the car came from the direction of Karibib. He assumes that the driver of the

vehicle knows the area very well. "On our route we passed a few huts where nobody was at home. There we found six wire loops, eight metal traps and tools with which further traps can be set," says Kühne.

After the increased number of poaching cases in the vicinity of Usakos and Karibib, the police in Erongo have also launched an investigation. "We want to look in our statistics to what extent the number of cases has increased," said Erongo police spokesman Erastus likuyu when asked by AZ. He added: "Our emergency services will continue to be deployed."

Kühne, meanwhile, continues to call on farmers to be vigilant and careful.