

Republikein

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Horn smuggler fined half a million Two Angolan fast

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Francoise Steynberg - A rhino horn smuggler, Robertos Ipingi, has been fined N \$ 500 000 or sentenced to two years in prison.

Ipinge was sentenced in the Otjiwarongo Magistrate's Court last Friday after he was found guilty in August 2019 of illegally owning and trading in one rhino horn, as well as violating the Organized Crime Act (Poca).

The case stems from Ipinge who was arrested on 11 August 2019 along with three other men near the Otjozondjupa Regional Council on Otjiwarongo with freshly sawn-off rhino horns in their possession by secret police officers. The suspects apparently wanted to exchange the horns.

In addition, police seized two luxury vehicles. The BMW 320I with registration mark SUNAKE NA has now been declared forfeited to the state because it was used during the rhino horn smuggling.

Two more Namibian wildlife criminals have been sentenced in the Omaruru Magistrate's Court after smuggling a live maggot in August 2019.

Benjamin Unanisa Kambombo and Vaapi Florin Mukandi were sentenced last Tuesday to a fine of N \$ 4 000 of which N \$ 2 000 was suspended, or imprisonment for 12 months of which six months was suspended for five years.

According to the weekly game crime report of the Namibian police and the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism, six suspected game criminals were arrested last week in connection with five cases.

Two of the suspects are linked to rhino poaching or horn smuggling and one to elephant poaching or ivory smuggling.

An Angolan citizen, Mr. Joaquim Soma and a Namibian, Mr. Correia Matheus Gayeta, was allegedly arrested last Saturday with a rhino horn in their possession on Otjiwarongo.

Another Angolan citizen, Mr. Jeremias Hilifavali was allegedly caught with a python skin in his possession on Omuthiya last Thursday.

On Onesi, Mr. Natangwe Emmanuel Paulus was allegedly caught with a piece of elephant skin in his possession last Friday.

Two suspects, Messrs. Muronga Hamutima and Matheus Mbanze, were apparently arrested on Rundu last week, each with an Itermagagvel in their possession.

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