



BOTSWANA NATIONAL NABBED FOR SUSPECTED POACHING IN BWABWATA

[Julia Heita](#) 21 Jun 2022



By: Eba Kandovazu

Environment and tourism minister Pohamba Shifeta today revealed that a 40-year-old Botswana male, a suspected poacher, is receiving medical treatment at Rundu State hospital after being shot by Bwabwata national park staff and wildlife protection services last week Tuesday.

Shifeta said at a press conference today that Park staff on regular patrol laid an ambush after discovering a giraffe's fresh carcass in a snare wire and hanging biltong.

“After some time, two male suspects approached before fleeing the scene, realising that they were being ambushed. The official fired warning shots for the suspects to stop but to no avail,” he said.

He added that, in the process, one of the suspects was shot in the leg and apprehended, while the other suspect managed to flee to Botswana.

“The one was injured and arrested by ministry officials in the Mahango Core area of the Bwabwata National Park,” he adds.

Shifeta said the suspect would be charged for contravening the nature conservation ordinance No. 4 of 1975.

“For illegally hunting a special protected game species, illegal entry into the park and for illegal entry into Namibia.”

He stressed that investigations would continue to establish the second suspect's identity and apprehension.

The poaching incident comes fresh off the heels of the discovery that 11 rhinos were reportedly poached in Etosha national park last week.

Shifeta also condemned this, saying that since the discovery of the carcasses, the ministry has moved to make security adjustments and close any loopholes in the park to ensure such incidences do not reoccur.

“Due to the safety and security of our animals, we are not able to give specific details on this; however, I warn those attempting to involve themselves in wildlife crimes, and in particular poaching, that we will leave no stone unturned to apprehend them and to bring them to justice,” he said.

Additionally, he said the ministry would not relent in ensuring maximum protection of our iconic species in the flagship Etosha National Park and elsewhere in the country,” Shifeta said.

He added that to ensure that security adjustments and strategies are implemented without fail, they have, among other measures, redeployed retired commissioner Ndahangwapo Kashihakumwa, head of the wildlife protection unit, to Etosha National Park with immediate effect.

“I am also pleased to inform you that last week between 14-16 June 2022, a joint anti-poaching unit managed to track and apprehend two suspects out of a group of five who attempted to hunt rhinos in the Etosha National Park,” he said.

Shifeta said the five suspects were seen in the park by a joint anti-poaching unit that was tracking a rhino.

“The suspects fled when approached by the anti-poaching unit, and two suspects were subsequently arrested,” the minister said.

According to Shifeta, investigations are at an advanced stage to apprehend the remaining three suspects whose identities are known to the authorities.

“I bring these cases to your attention to alert you that our staff and joint anti-poaching units are constantly engaged in activities to deter and prevent wildlife crimes and apprehend suspects in cases where poaching has already occurred.”

He also took a moment to appreciate his personnel’s work on the ground for their continued efforts in protecting our wildlife.

“I wish to implore them to intensify this effort as we are up against a persistent and continuously evolving adversary,” Shifeta maintained.

He said that because Namibia has the biggest population of black rhinos in the world, the world looks up to Namibia to prevent these critically endangered species from going extinct.

“This is also a call to patriotic Namibians to stand with the authorities in not only condemning these barbaric actions but also report any suspected poaching or other crimes committed against our wildlife. Our natural resources must be preserved and utilised for the benefit of all of us,” he said.