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- TWO ARRESTED FOR POSSESSION OF PROTECTED PLANTS



Two arrested with 27 protected plants

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Arrests made by Blue Rhino Task Team

The suspects were arrested after ministry officials followed up on video footage they had obtained, showing two persons collecting the protected plants.

Ellanie Smit

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A Namibian and a Chinese national were arrested in Okahandja on Saturday after they were found in possession of 27 protected plant species.

The confiscated items included four Elephant's foot plants, 15 Cyphostemma, eight Commiphora, in addition to five plastic bags containing Welwitchia seeds and 12 bags filled with a variety of unidentified seeds.

The suspects were arrested after ministry officials followed up on video footage they had obtained, showing two persons collecting the protected plants, reportedly around Usakos.

Ministry of environment and forestry spokesperson Romeo Muyunda said a team was dispatched immediately to investigate the incident.

“Preliminary investigations in the area confirmed the incident, however the suspects could not be found. While members of the ministry were on their way back to Windhoek, they came across the two suspects in Okahandja driving a black seven-seater vehicle.”

Operation underway

Officials followed the suspects, who were reportedly unaware they had been spotted, to a flat in Okahandja. Meanwhile, the Blue Rhino Task Team were informed and members of the task team arrived at the scene, where they then arrested the two suspects.

In another incident forestry officials discovered 75 wooden planks made from allegedly illegally harvested wood on a farm in the Kavango West Region in the Ncamagoro constituency.

Provisional information indicates that the logs were harvested without the consent and knowledge of the farm owner.

“For now no arrests have been made or fines issued. We have however in our possession the names of suspected people involved in this illegal activity. Investigations continue.”