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The photo was taken in Etosha National Park. It is for illustration only. Photo: Claudia Reiter

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TRAILER WITH RHINO ROLLS OVER

After an accident with a rhino cow investigation is initiated

The Environment Ministry is launching an investigation into the transport of a white rhino cow and her calf after a car accident. The accident happened on Tuesday around 1 p.m. about 50 km from Rehoboth in the direction of Kalkrand.

Claudia Rider

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(Edited by Claudia Reiter)

Windhoek

Ministry spokesman Romeo Muyunda confirmed the accident, which happened in the Kalkrand district, and said police informed them Tuesday night because rhinos were involved. According to Muyunda, the rhino cow and her calf were traveling in two different cars with trailers. He said the wagon transporting the cow was involved in the accident. "By the time our officers arrived at the scene of the accident, the vehicle with the calf had already driven back to Geluksburg Farm."

The rhinos were transported by Johan Lombaard of Golden Game CC from his farm in Mariental, Geluksburg, to Uitkyk Farm near Kalkrand.

Muyunda said that while Lombaard is a game trader, he did not have the proper permits to transport these rhinos. According to him, although Lombaard had a veterinary permit, he did not have a fishing license that would allow the rhinos to be caught and transported. He added that a person cannot have a veterinary permit without a fishing permit.

"According to the owner (Lombaard) both rhinos were returned to the farm in Mariental. This is on the orders of the ministry." Muyunda said the calf was brought there on Tuesday evening and the rhino cow yesterday morning.

Muyunda said investigations into the matter are ongoing, particularly to determine how Lombaard obtained a veterinary permit without a fishing permit. After the investigation is complete, the ministry will decide whether to initiate proceedings and make an arrest.

Lombaard confirmed the accident and said the trailer carrying the cow overturned. However, he stressed that he had all the necessary permits to transport the rhinos. "Everything is OK. This is the only discrepancy and a mistake by the ministry that will be corrected," Lombaard said.

Deputy Police Commissioner Eric Clay, coordinator of the Hardap police investigation, also confirmed the accident and said the driver of the Land Cruiser pulling the trailer carrying the rhino cow lost control and the car overturned.