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Rhino poaching surges 93 percent in Namibia

Authorities say 87 rhinos were killed last year compared with 45 in 2021, most of them poached from the country's largest park.

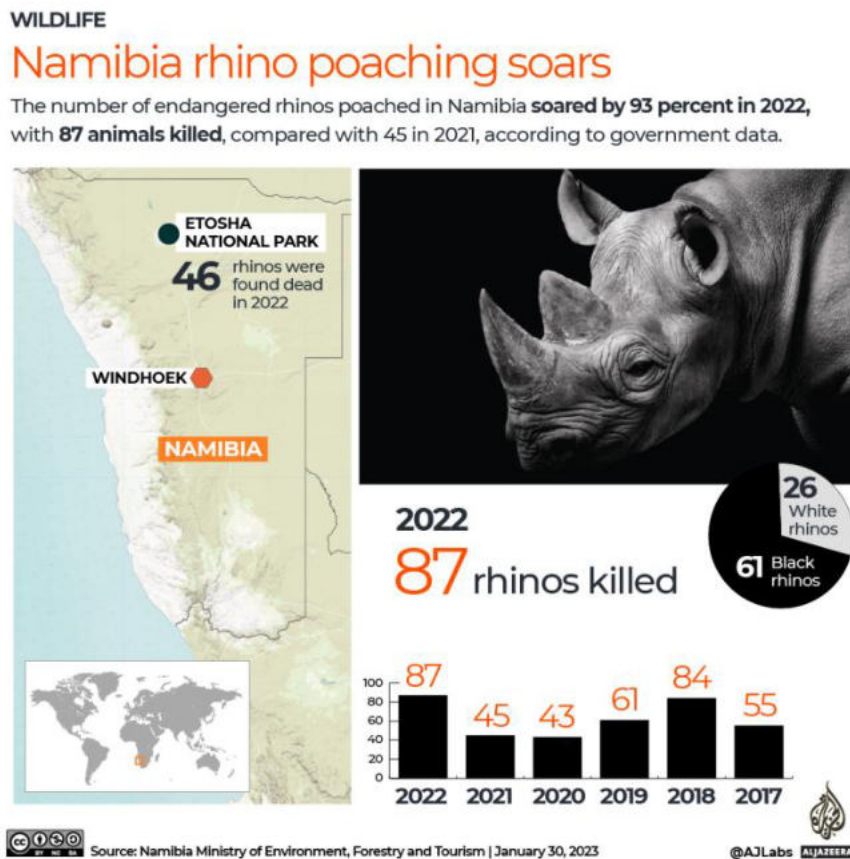


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The number of endangered rhinos poached in Namibia reached an all-time high last year after 87 animals were killed compared with 45 in 2021, official government data has shown.

Africa's rhino population has been decimated over the decades to feed the demand for rhino horn, which, despite being made of the same material as rhino hair and fingernails, is prized in East Asia as a supposed medicine and as jewellery.

On Monday, Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism spokesperson Romeo Muyunda said poachers killed 61 black and 26 white rhinos mainly in Namibia's largest park, Etosha, where 46 rhinos were found dead.



(Al Jazeera)

“We note with serious concern that our flagship park, Etosha National Park, is a poaching hotspot,” Muyunda said, adding that the ministry and law enforcement officials have stepped up efforts against wildlife crime in the park to curb poaching.

The Southern African country is [home](#) to the only free-roaming black rhinos left in the world and also accounts for a third of the world's remaining black rhinos.

Rhino poaching has plagued Southern Africa for decades, especially in neighbouring South Africa and Botswana, leading to anti-poaching programmes, including strict policing and dehorning, or removing horns from the rhinos as a way of discouraging poaching.

Namibia is also home to the second-largest white rhino population in the world after South Africa.

The Save the Rhino Trust estimates there are about 200 free-roaming black rhinos in Namibia, mainly in the northeast.

Meanwhile, elephant poaching in Namibia has declined over the years, from a high of 101 in 2015 to a low of four elephants poached last year.