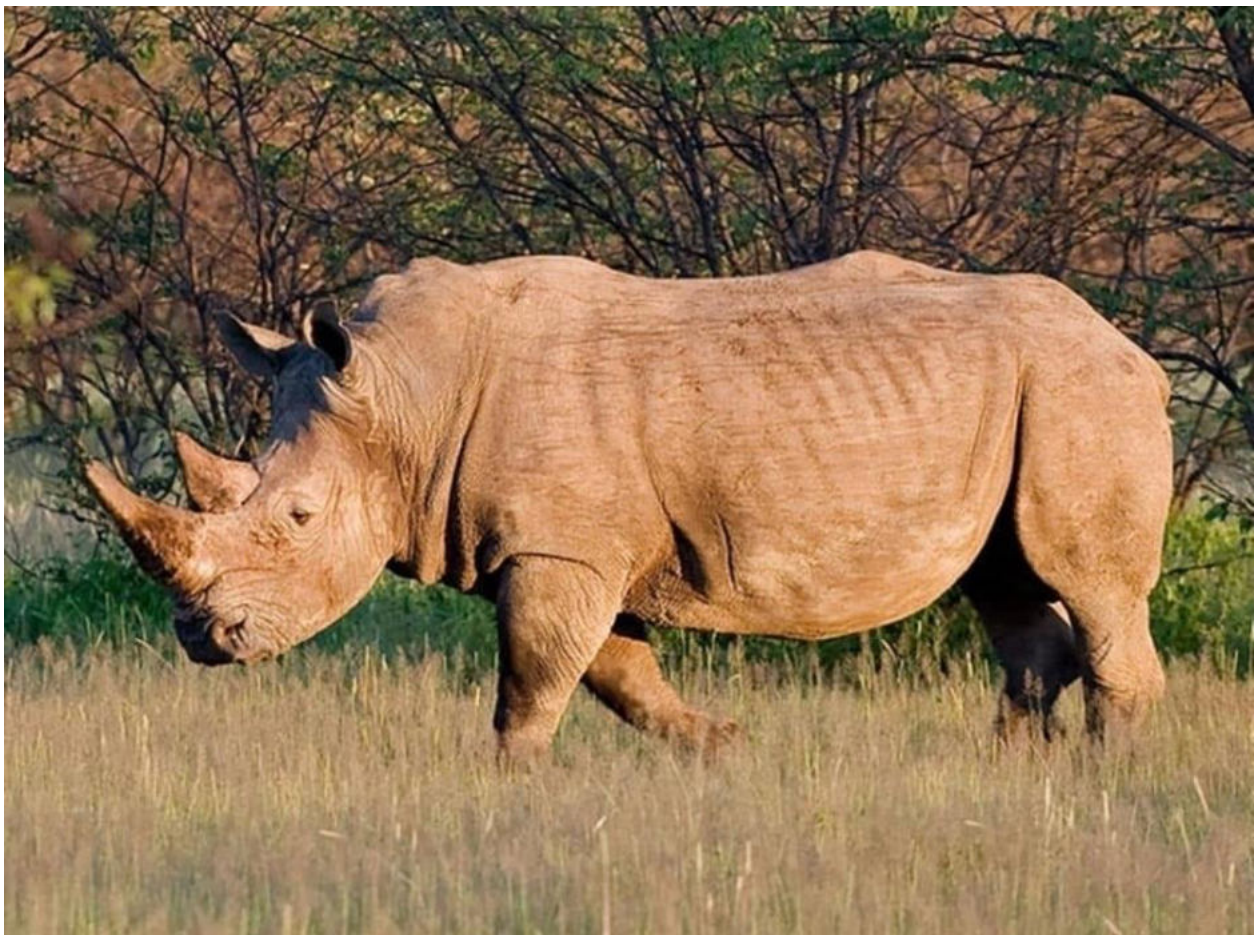


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rhino poaching

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# FIFTEEN RHINOS POACHED THIS YEAR

Wildlife Justice Commission issues report

**Of the 87 rhinos poached last year, 61 were black rhinos and 26 white rhinos.**

**Ellanie Smit, Tanja Bause**

- 18 HOURS AGO - - 2023-05-09 00:00:00

Ellanie Smit - A total of 15 rhinos were poached this year, compared to 87 in 2022 and 45 in 2021.

The last rhino was poached between 1 and 28 April on a private farm in the Grootfontein area. The carcass was only discovered last week and the investigation indicates that the animal was shot twice with a hunting rifle.

The spokesperson for the Ministry of the Environment, Forestry and Tourism, Romeo Muyunda, confirmed the incident and said that the investigation is still ongoing and that no one has been arrested yet.

Last year's figure is the third highest since 2013 and is surpassed only by the 97 rhinos poached in 2015. Of the 87 rhinos poached last year, 61 were black rhinos and 26 white rhinos, and 46 of those rhinos were poached in Etosha National Park. In 2022, 15 rhinos were poached on conservation farms and another 25 white rhinos on private farms.

The Wildlife Justice Commission (WJC) recently said in a report that Vietnamese criminal networks are filling the void left by the removal of Chinese networks in Namibia, South Africa, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Angola and Mozambique.

"Only in South Africa do Chinese networks still dominate the illegal trade in rhino horn."

Since its establishment in 2015, the WJC has worked on 16 investigations – spanning several years – involving rhino-related crimes in Vietnam, China, Malaysia, Laos, Namibia, South Africa, Mozambique, DRC, Thailand, Angola and Cambodia.

According to the report, it is difficult to quantify how much rhino horn is legally stored as few countries publicly disclose their stock figures. However, the most recent figure indicates that more than 87 tons of rhino horns and pieces are stored in ten African territories.

The analysis of seizure data also reportedly showed that Malaysia has emerged as an important transit point for the trade in rhino horn from Africa to Asia. This is linked to seizures originating from Uganda, Mozambique, Namibia and South Africa.

Data further shows that 83 kilograms of Namibian rhino horns were seized during 2020-21.

Furthermore, the report also showed that poached horns are still a key source for the illegal supply chain, mainly from South Africa where the rate of poaching remains high despite the 50% decrease since a peak in 2014, but also from other key countries, including Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe.

According to information gathered by the WJC, smugglers in the DRC appear to obtain their horns from rhinos poached in Kenya, Namibia and Botswana, and some have used Zambia as a transit point to store and consolidate horns.

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