



Namibia reports record level of rhino poaching

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The number of endangered rhinos poached in Namibia last year was the highest on record and almost twice as many as the year before, officials say.

A total of 87 rhinos were killed compared with 45 in 2021, official government data show.

Most were poached in Etosha, Namibia's biggest national park, officials say.

Rhino numbers in Africa have dropped significantly in recent decades to feed demand for rhino horn in China and Vietnam.

Poachers killed 61 black and 26 white rhinos mainly in Etosha, where 46 rhinos were found dead, Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism spokesperson Romeo Muyunda said.

"We note with serious concern that our flagship park, Etosha National Park, is a poaching hotspot," Mr Muyunda said.

International criminal gangs now use sophisticated equipment to track and tranquilise the animals before hacking off the horn, leaving them bleeding to death.

Poaching in South Africa and Botswana has led to wildlife teams sawing off the rhino horns in order to keep them alive.

For many generations rhino horn has been used in traditional Chinese medicine despite there being no proven medical benefit.

Poaching is also being fuelled by demand in Vietnam, where horns are displayed as a sign of wealth.

The most endangered is the black rhino with just over 5,000 still alive.

However, elephant poaching in Namibia has declined from a high of 101 in 2015 to four last year.