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Informanté

62 wire snares retrieved at Etosha

Maria David

THE Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) is concerned about the increasing use of snares to illegally hunt and kill wild animals in Etosha National Park.

This comes after wire snares were discovered and retrieved in Etosha National Park.

The ministry's spokesperson, Romeo Muyunda, said that a few animals were recently spotted by tourists in the park with snares around their necks, causing public concern.

Muyunda indicated that snare removal is one of the day-to-day duties of the park management.

"It is suspected that snares are being set up by some community members who reside within the National Park with the intention to hunt and kill game animals for meat," he said.



Photos: Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT)

Muyunda said that, so far, a total of 62 active wire snares were retrieved in the area around Okakuejo.

Furthermore, fresh human footprints were also observed, and a combined search of the suspected residents was also instituted at Okakuejo.

According to Muyunda, there are approximately 400 community members within Etosha National Park.

Muyunda said that this practice is not in any way sanctioned by the ministry and is illegal and punishable by law.

Thus, since June 2023, the ministry has commissioned a joint operation in collaboration with the Namibian Police (Nampol) and the Namibia Defence Force (NDF) around Okakuejo to search for and remove the snares in the park.

Additionally, four community engagement meetings were conducted by the joint team of Nampol, MEFT, and NDF.

The communities were educated and reminded of the rules and regulations of the park, as well as the penalties for contravention as per the provisions of the law.

Muyunda said the snare removal exercise is ongoing in all their national parks and called upon tourists or visitors in the parks who may come across active wire snares, traps, or any other illegal activity to report it to the ministry's officials for swift action.

Muyunda stressed that Etosha National Park is their flagship park, and such incidents tarnish the park's reputation.

Should it be established that any of their officials are involved, they will be severely dealt with following the established disciplinary protocols, he added.