

# Republikein

*Jou land. Jou mense. Jou nuus.*

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This springbok was photographed on 13 August at the Nebrownii water hole near Okaukuejo. Photo provided

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# MORE TRAPS SET IN ETOSHA

**Tanya Bause**

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“We cannot remove the people; they are part of the park. We just have to see how we can ensure that they follow the rules. These are communities that have lived there for years.”

So said Romeo Muyunda, the spokesperson for the Ministry of the Environment, Forestry and Tourism, about the approximately 400 community members currently living in the Etosha National Park.

The communities live there because it is their ancestral land.

This follows after tourists recently photographed a springbok and a lion with wire nooses around their necks in the park.

Responding to queries, the ministry said it was concerned about the increasing number of wire snares being used to hunt wild animals in the park.

"We want to emphasize that removing the wire snares is one of our daily responsibilities as part of park management. The suspicion is that some community members living in the national park are setting wire snares with the aim of hunting game for meat," according to the statement.

The use of wire snares is not approved by the ministry and is illegal.

Since June 2023, the Ministry of the Environment, the Namibian Police (Nampol) and the Namibian Armed Forces (NDF) have been engaged in a joint operation to locate and remove wire snares around Okaukuejo. They removed 62 wire snares in three days.

"Fresh human tracks were also found and followed to the residents in Okaukuejo. A search was carried out and the people were warned. No one could be arrested as there was not enough evidence," Muyunda said.

The joint investigation team also convened four community meetings. The rules and regulations of the park were presented to the communities during the meetings and they were also informed about the punitive measures that are applied if the provisions of the law are violated.

"Operations to remove wire snares in all our national parks are currently underway. We would like to appeal to our tourists or visitors to the parks who come across wire snares, traps or any

other illegal activity to immediately report it to the ministry's officials so that they can take swift action," according to the statement.

A report of a springbok in a wire snare was received on 17 August this year. A veterinarian from the ministry shot the springbok with an anesthetic dart. Unfortunately, the wire cut too deeply into the springbok's tissue and the animal had to be euthanized.

"We want to warn those involved to stop the illegal activities or they risk being caught and charged for illegal hunting of game.

"The Etosha National Park is our flagship park; such incidents tarnish the park's reputation. If it is determined that any of our officials are involved, they will be subject to established disciplinary procedures." – [tanja@republikein.com.na](mailto:tanja@republikein.com.na)