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MEC Nomusa Dube-Ncube on arrest of suspect with elephant tusk

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Statement by the MEC for Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs Nomusa Dube-Ncube on the arrest of a suspect with elephant tusk valued at R150 000

I wish to commend the community of KwaMsane in uMtubatuba for working with officials from our entity, Ezemvelo Wildlife and law enforcement agencies in the fight against wildlife crime.

An intelligence driven operation, following a tip-off from the community, resulted in the arrest of a suspect for illegal possession and sale of elephant ivory in KwaMsane, North of KwaZulu-Natal Province.

The man was arrested with the elephant tusk valued at R150 000 and was due to appear in court today - Umtubatuba – CAS 75/05/2020.

As guided by the National Environmental Management Biodiversity Act, we are obliged to sustain our fight against wildlife crime. In terms of the Act, the illegal trade in ivory is a criminal offence and anyone found guilty could spend a maximum penalty of 10 years in jail or a fine of R10 million.

As we battle COVID-19, we have identified nature conservation as one of the areas for job creation for local communities. We are proud as KZN that we are able to provide tourists an unparalleled experience of the provinces' wildlife and eco-tourism.

Our entity, Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife manages more than 114 protected areas and close to 40 facilities that provide accommodation to 6500 people per night. These include camp sites, Didima, Giant's Castle and Hilltop in the Hluhluwe-Imfolozi Park and Ntshondwe in Ithala Game Reserve.

Once travel restrictions are lifted, we are planning to aggressively market all these strategic facilities in order to grow tourism and generate more revenue for the provincial economy.

Critically, we have initiated programmes that will benefit rural communities by using a portion of the revenue generated through conservation services to implement viable projects based on the needs of local communities.

Enquiries

Ndabezinhle Sibiyi
Cell: 082 375 4742

Musa Mntambo (KZN Ezemvelo Wildlife)
Cell: 083 2849586

Nathi Olifant
Cell: 060 970 5113

Province: [KwaZulu-Natal](#)