

CAPETIMES / NEWS

*FORTY SANParks employees found guilty of being involved in rhino poaching have been dismissed, Forestry, Fisheries and Environment Minister Barbara Creecy has revealed Picture: Shelley Kjonstad/African News Agency (ANA)*

## 40 SANParks employees sacked over rhino poaching

By Siyavuya Mzantsi ⌚ 5h ago



Cape Town - FORTY SANParks employees found guilty of being involved in rhino poaching have been dismissed, Forestry, Fisheries and Environment Minister Barbara Creecy has revealed.

She was responding to a Parliamentary question on whether any SANParks staff were involved in the poaching of rhino for their horns.

“SANParks staff members have been involved in rhino poaching since 2009. In dealing with rhino poaching-related offences, SANParks runs a parallel process alongside the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA),” said Creecy.

"Firstly, employees are charged in line with the SANParks Disciplinary Policy and procedures. In terms of the SANParks Disciplinary Policy and procedures, poaching/unauthorised hunting and killing of animals fall under Category 1 offences, and employees found guilty of such are dismissed for the first offence. This internal disciplinary process was followed in respect of the 40 employees mentioned. Secondly, employees who are guilty of rhino poaching are also criminally charged by the NPA and the South African Police Service," she said.

Criminal charges for poaching of rhinos were lodged against all 40 employees and one has since been convicted with a sentence of four years' imprisonment or a R20, 000 fine being imposed.

"Two years of the four-year sentence were suspended for five years. All other cases are still pending," she said.

Meanwhile two suspected abalone poachers were arrested on Friday in Gifkommetjie in the Cape of Good Hope Section of Table Mountain National Park for being in possession of West Coast Rock Lobster without a permit.

One black rubber duck, including one 200-horsepower engine was confiscated during the arrest, said SANParks.

"The items were booked with the SA Police Services. A case of poaching has been opened with the SAPS," said TMNP Park Manager Frans van Rooyen.

He said the arrests follow on the capture of 88 suspected poachers since the beginning of the year, bringing to 90 the suspects having been arrested to date.

Van Rooyen said TMNP, together with its law enforcement partners in the SAPS, City of Cape Town and other agencies, were working jointly to fight the scourge of abalone poaching.

"The teams have been conducting daily sea patrols in the Marine Protected Areas of TMNP to fight against poaching that threatens the marine resources."

"We really appreciate the assistance and support we are getting from the City of Cape Town Marine Law Enforcement Unit and the SAPS. I'd also like to thank the TMNP rangers for a spectacular job well done," said Van Rooyen.



A rubber duck belonging to suspected poachers, confiscated during an operation in Gifkommetjie

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