

Local news

## AB Steyn and Dawie Groenewald released on bail at the Nelspruit Magistrate's Court

The men were arrested on Wednesday afternoon for the illegal possession of 19 rhino horns.

• 7 hours ago

Stefan, de Villiers, Linzetta Calitz and Chelsea Pieterse

2 minutes read



Schalk Abraham Steyn (48), better known to Lowvelders as AB, and Limpopo game farmer, Dawid Groenewald (52), were released on R50 000 bail each on Friday afternoon.

This was during their second appearance in Nelspruit Magistrate's Court on Friday. In an unusual turn of events, the case had to be moved to Nelspruit Police Station as the court was closed due to a positive Covid-19 case.



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*The set-up for proceedings at the Nelspruit Police Station. > Photo: Linzetta Calitz*

They were released on condition that they report to their local police stations once a week and that they do not communicate with any witnesses.

Steyn was also made to hand over his passport to the investigating officer as part of his bail conditions. Groenewald had already handed his passport over to police as part of his bail conditions in a case he appeared in for court in 2010 and is still pending.

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Steyn and Groenewald were arrested for the illegal possession and selling of rhino horns on Wednesday.

The attorneys for both the accused thanked the presiding magistrate for facilitating them under such extraordinary circumstance. The duo will make their next appearance in the Nelspruit Magistrate's Court on September 10.

**June 22, 17:30 – UPDATE: Accused in Mbombela rhino horn bust identified**





Schalk Abraham (AB) Steyn and Dawid (Dawie) Groenewald. Photos: Supplied.

The two men who were arrested for the illegal possession and selling of rhino horns on Wednesday, appeared in the Nelspruit Magistrate's Court on Thursday afternoon.

They are Schalk Abraham Steyn (48), better known to Lowvelders as AB, and Limpopo game farmer, Dawid Groenewald (52).

The case was postponed to Friday for a formal bail application. They will remain in custody until then. It is not yet clear in which court the case will be heard.

According to the Hawks' Col Katlego Mogale, Steyn and Groenewald were arrested on Wednesday in a multidisciplinary operation conducted by the Hawks' Organised Crime Investigation Unit, Wildlife Trafficking Counter-intelligence and the private sector, in their continued effort to curb wildlife trafficking in Mbombela.

"The duo were arrested while allegedly transporting 19 rhino horns in two bakkies," Mogale said in a statement.

"An investigation to ascertain if the suspects are linked to crimes contravening the Endangered Species Act is continuing," she said.

In May 2018, Lowvelder reported on Steyn after he was arrested and appeared in the Pretoria Criminal Court for an alleged fake sale of buffaloes.

**Read more: [Local man nabbed for buffalo fraud](#)**



He has since been handed a five year suspended sentence. Groenewald, a Limpopo businessman and game breeder, first appeared in court in 2010 after he and 10 others were arrested following a 15-month investigation.

Groenewald, at the time, was pinpointed as the mastermind behind one of South Africa's largest rhino poaching syndicates. His co-accused, which included two veterinary surgeons and a pilot, were linked to hundreds of illegal rhino poaching incidents over a four-year period and initially faced over 1 800 charges.

These charges ranged from racketeering, money laundering, illegal hunting of rhino, dealing in rhino horn and contravening the Biodiversity and Prevention of Organised Crime Act.

**Read more: [Groenewald trial to continue in 2021](#)**

### June 21, 21:00: Suspects arrested for possession of 19 rhino horns in Mbombela

Shock waves are making their way through the Lowveld as a well-known local businessman and a Limpopo game farmer were arrested for the possession of 19 rhino horns in Mbombela today.

The Hawks confirmed the arrest and said the horns are estimated to be worth millions. The arrest was made late this afternoon in an operation driven by the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (Hawks) in the Riverside area.

The suspects are expected to make a court appearance either on Thursday or Friday. They will be detained until then. Their identities are known to *Lowvelder*, but they cannot be named as they have yet to appear in court.

