



CAPETIMESNEWS



## Armed suspected rhino poacher shot dead at Kruger National Park

By Staff Reporter    Oct 19, 2021

CAPE TOWN - An armed suspected poacher was shot dead while his accomplice managed to escape when Kruger National Park (KNP) rangers followed up after hearing gunshots and stumbled upon them.

A backpack with two rhino horns was recovered next to the body of the suspect, as well as a large-calibre rifle and poaching equipment.

A carcass of a male black rhino was found nearby, indicating that the horns were hacked from this particular animal on Saturday.

The KNP has seen an increase of 29.41% in the number of poachers arrested between July and September 28, 2021.

KNP managing executive Gareth Coleman congratulated the anti-poaching teams for their weekend success and the prosecuting team on the conviction and sentencing of Simon Mahumbane Lubisi to 19 years in prison in relation to the killing of a white rhino in October 2014.

Four suspected rhino poachers were arrested in the KNP over the weekend, South African National Parks (SANParks) said on Monday.

Members of the Rangers Corp, assisted by the K9 Unit and the aviators of the Airwing, arrested the suspects at the Stolzneke section of the park.

In the first incident on Friday, rangers followed up on a spoor and startled the suspected poachers, who were sitting under a tree. They tried to flee, but the rangers quickly rounded them up and arrested them.

A hunting rifle, ammunition and poaching equipment were seized at the scene. The suspects will appear in court while investigations continue, SANParks said.

"We are saddened to have lost a rhino over the weekend but are encouraged by the brave actions of our multidisciplinary anti-poaching teams who successfully took out two rifles from the system and apprehended suspects who are now in custody.

"We also appreciate the heavy sentences that the Skukuza Regional Court has been handing down recently. It gives motivation to all those who work tirelessly to arrest the suspects found in the park. The kingpins are still out there and we hope they get arrested soon to face the might of the law for their criminality," said Coleman.

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