

24 rhinos killed in South Africa since beginning of December
Nine alleged poachers were arrested in the same time period.

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Picture: iStock

The department of forestry, fisheries and the environment has confirmed that 24 rhinos carcasses have been found in South Africa since the beginning of December.

Six of the carcasses were found in KwaZulu-Natal, four in the Western Cape, seven in Mpumalanga and seven in the Kruger National Park.

Nine alleged poachers were arrested in the same time period.

“The department condemns the continued poaching of these iconic species for their horn, and commends the work being done by rangers and security officials over the festive period to stem the killing of rhino,” said the department in a statement.

ALSO READ: [Shock as poachers kill five rhinos at a private game reserve](#)

In a statement celebrating World Ranger Day in July, Minister of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries Barbara Creecy [revealed](#) that 249 rhino had been poached for their horn in South Africa from January to the end of June 2021.

While this was higher than the number of rhino killed for their horns in the same period last year, at 166, it was less than the 318 rhino that were poached in the first six months of 2019.

During the same time period, the Kruger National Park experienced 715 poacher activities, an increase of 3.77% in comparison to the number in 2020, which was 689 for the same period. From January to end of June 2021, 132 rhino were poached for their horns in the Kruger National Park.

One elephant was poached for its ivory in the Kruger National Park during this period.

40 alleged poachers were arrested within the Kruger National Park, while a total of 125 people were arrested for rhino poaching and rhino horn trafficking across the country.

ALSO READ: [Three rhino poachers sentenced to 85 years imprisonment](#)

A total of 14 cases were finalised in the same time period, representing a 93% conviction rate.

“We remain aware that criminal elements within our society continue to take advantage of the socio- economic pressures and drive demand for illegal wildlife products. Accordingly, the department, working with a number of communities, NGOs and donors, continues with various community developmental programmes, in collaboration with its partners, SANParks, Provinces and neighbouring countries. The only long term sustainable solution to wildlife management and conservation is to ensure communities living on the outskirts of our national parks benefit from tourism and other opportunities,” said Creecy.