

The 175 Witness

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SANParks warns of video of distressed rhino cow, shot and hacked by poachers

Witness Reporter
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The South African National Parks (SANParks) reported that its rhino dehorning team made a gruesome discovery of a badly mutilated female rhino in the South of the Kruger National Park (KNP).

The South African National Parks (SANParks) warned people on Saturday about a video circulating on social media depicting a "severely injured White Rhino cow", saying it was "distressing to watch".

In a statement, SANParks said that its rhino dehorning team made the gruesome discovery of a badly mutilated female rhino in the South of the Kruger National Park (KNP) on Thursday.

"According to the SANParks Veterinarian and the Section Ranger who attended to the rhino, it appeared as if the animal had been shot a few days prior to being found. Bullet wounds were visible in her head and foreleg, and there were open wounds to her nasal cavity where her horn had been brutally hacked off. There were additional injuries to the lower back, presumably dealt to stun her.

"A decision was made to euthanize the rhino due to the extent of her wounds and level of infection. SANParks Environmental Crime Investigations Unit attended to the scene to collect all available evidence."

SANParks said the incident takes place despite the continuous and dedicated efforts by SANParks to curb Rhino poaching in the Kruger National Park through a number of focussed initiatives.

"Sixty nine poachers have been arrested this year alone in the Park with a further 105 perpetrators of environmental crime arrested outside the boundaries of the Park.

"The Skukuza Regional Court has recently imposed heavy sentences on those who were found guilty of rhino poaching in the KNP which has been welcomed by SANParks."

Reacting to the discovery of the rhino cow, the Managing Executive of the KNP Gareth Coleman said "this horrific incident has left our Rangers and colleagues traumatised as they are doing everything they can to protect these magnificent animals and threatened species. Rhino sightings are a key reason why tourists visit the Park and in so doing contribute to the local economy. We are appealing to members of the public to assist law enforcement agencies to bring these criminals to book," said Coleman.