

MENU



SIGN IN

MERCURY NEWS

KZN man gets 28-year prison sentence for poaching rhino in the Hluhluwe-Umfolozi Game Reserve

*File Picture*

Published 11h ago



Written by

[Karen Singh](#)

SHARE



Listen to this article



0:00 / 2:40 1X

DURBAN - A 45-year-old man convicted of rhino poaching was sentenced to 28 years in prison by the Empangeni Regional Court.

Michael Kleinbaas Masuku was convicted of conspiracy to hunt rhino, two counts of hunting/killing a protected species and one count of hunting without a permit.

Story continues below Advertisement

The National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) regional spokesperson Natasha Kara said the incident took place in the Hluhluwe-Umfolozi Game Reserve in October 2018.

Kara said before the incidents, Masuku had also conspired with another man to go into the game reserve to kill rhinos for financial gain.

Describing the incident, Kara said the men were armed with the necessary weapons and tools and gained access to the game reserve, where they shot one white and one black rhino.

Story continues below Advertisement

“They removed two horns from the first rhino and one horn from the second rhino before fleeing,” said Kara.

Investigations led to Masuku, and he was arrested shortly after, she said.

During the court proceedings, regional court prosecutor Sharon Bux led evidence of cell phone mapping, showing that Masuku travelled from Mpumalanga to Hluhluwe before the incident.

Story continues below Advertisement

“A state witness also gave evidence linking Masuku directly to the crimes, especially the shooting of the rhinos,” said Kara.

Kara said the accused was sentenced to eight years imprisonment for conspiracy and 10 years imprisonment for each of the other charges.

“While he was sentenced to a collective 38 years imprisonment, the court ruled that some sentences will run concurrently, resulting in an effective 28 years imprisonment,” she said.

Story continues below Advertisement

The NPA congratulated the prosecution and investigating teams on a job well done.

“The NPA welcomes the sentence and conviction. Rhinos are on the endangered species list, and we have a duty and a mandate to protect and preserve them,” it said.

MOST READ:

- [WATCH: Two suspects appear in court over theft of fuel worth R1200 from a Westville garage](#)
- [Durban motorist recalls how Good Samaritan saved her from attack by knife wielding robber at a traffic light](#)
- [Kloof residents raise alarm over land invasions](#)
- [KZN man shoots 2 sons dead, injures 3 others and turns gun on himself in dispute over new bed](#)
- [Woman, 42, killed in alleged drive-by shooting in KwaMashu](#)

[THE MERCURY](#)

RELATED TOPICS:

NPA KWAZULU-NATAL CRIME AND COURTS POACHING

SHARE

