



Many rangers suffer psychological impact of rhino poaching says SanParks

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The South African National Parks (SanParks) has shone the spotlight on some of the psychological effects suffered by rangers in their fight against rhino poaching.



Radioactive rhino horns may be the end to poaching in South Africa
This comes at a time when SanParks has lost one ranger in the line of duty this year, from wildlife crime.

SanParks board member Yolán Friedman says rangers are forced to fight battles that they are not trained for in their quest to save wildlife.

“Our rangers got into conservation and they are trained in conservation. They are not trained to be militant and shoot people. So the psycho-social impacts of poachers and the fight against wildlife crime and the militarisation of our parks is huge.

“We are seeing children who now have absent parents. Rangers are in the field for time. We’re seeing the impact of the post traumatic stress disorder from rangers but affecting children because the children of these parents are also being affected.”

The fight against rhino poaching at SanParks is expected to pick up momentum with more air support now available.

On Thursday, mining giant Anglo American donated four batwing aircrafts to SanParks.

The aircrafts will assist the fight against wildlife crime, especially rhino poaching in the 2 million hectare Kruger National Park (KNP).

Environmental Affairs Minister Barbara Creecy, who was present at the event, says the department and law enforcement agencies have had some success in arresting some perpetrators of these atrocious crimes.

“We have succeeded in the first six months of this year to arrest 69 people for wildlife crimes. Four of them were arrested with more than 56 pieces of rhino horn.”

While the fight is far from over, unofficial data suggests that over 100 rhinos were killed this year.

However, the 4 new aircraft are expected to make a huge contribution in this battle against poaching.

“While we need more boots on the ground, but it is also a war that needs to be conducted along modern lines. I’m sure that you will agree with me that these little machines are expected to take the war into the 21st century,” adds Creecy.