



EYEWITNESS NEWS

SANPARKS HOPES HEFTY SENTENCE HANDLED TO KNP RHINO POACHERS DETERS CRIMINALS

Lucky Shihlangu and Sergio Mathebula were found guilty and sentenced to 18 years imprisonment on Monday.



FILE: Kruger National Park spokesperson Ike Phaahla said that he hoped that the hefty sentences would send a strong message to criminals that continue to target rhinos for their horns. Picture: utopia88/123rf.com

Veronica Mokhoali | 24 January 2023 10:19

JOHANNESBURG - South African National Parks (SANParks) welcomed the hefty sentence handed to two Mozambican nationals convicted for rhino poaching by the Skukuza Regional Court.

Lucky Shihlangu and Sergio Mathebula were found guilty and sentenced to 18 years imprisonment on Monday.

The two were arrested in the Malelane section of the Kruger National Park in September after they were found in possession of a hunting rifle, an axe, and two rhino horns.

Kruger National Park spokesperson Ike Phaahla said that he **hoped that the hefty sentences** would send a strong message to criminals that **continue to target rhinos for their horns**.

“We hope that the sentences that have been meted out, especially in this year, are going to send a strong message to those who are intending to get into the park to do criminal acts. We hope this would discourage them.”

He said that the latest successful conviction and sentencing showed that the park and law enforcement officials were strengthening the **fight against wildlife poaching** at the revered national park.

“As Kruger National Park, with the Justice Department, the NPA, and all other relevant stakeholders, we are very happy that the force, especially in the last five/six years, they have been giving out strict sentences. We have to drive the message.”