



NEWS CRIME AND COURTS

Mozambican gets 18 years in jail for killing Kruger Park rhino, as well as on arms ammo, trespassing charges



As many as two rhinos a day get poached in Kruger National Park alone. Photographer: Armand Hough

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A Mozambican man, convicted for poaching, will spend the next 18 years in prison.

Santos Baloyi, 31, was arrested after a rhino was killed at Kruger National Park in September. He was also convicted on charges of trespassing, contravention of the Immigration Act, possession of a firearm with a serial number removed, possession of ammunition and possession of a dangerous weapon.

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[National Prosecuting Authority](#) spokesperson in Mpumalanga, Monica Nyuswa, said rangers were conducting routine patrols when they heard gunshots near the Afsaal part of the park.

"They spotted Baloyi with his two accomplices. When the men saw the rangers, they fired shots at them and the rangers fired back. Baloyi was captured while his accomplices managed to get away. The rangers went back to where they spotted the trio and found two fresh rhino horns and an axe. Baloyi was subsequently arrested," she said.

According to the NPA, state prosecutor Lot Mgiba led evidence of a ballistics report confirming that the firearm that was found in the accused's possession was the same firearm that was used to kill the rhino.

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Baloyi pleaded guilty to the crime.

Nyuswa said the court sentenced the accused to 18 years of direct imprisonment.

"The National Prosecuting Authority welcomes the conviction and sentence imposed on the accused with the hope that this sentence will deter like-minded poachers," she said.

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