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Kruger National Park conservation efforts see number of rhino increase



A rhino in the Kruger National Park. Picture: File

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Pretoria - The number of rhino in the Kruger National Park has increased.

This after the use of technology and sniffer dogs to deter poaching.

In the past financial year, the park reported about 180 cases of rhino poaching, a decrease of 45% compared with previous years.

Security camera were installed and 12 more installations are expected. The park said it had installed three systems, which had infrared technology, for the purpose of detecting any movement of the animals at night.

Rhino, and many other species, including lion, leopard, elephant and buffalo, have been decreasing.

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Speaking to a media contingent at the park, head ranger Sam Madalane said any suspicious activity would be detected by the technology.

“We get to pick up the trend of vehicle movement. We can pick up an illegal trend easily when the person is actually doing more movements at one place, and we can actually deploy men to go and investigate,” he said.

Spokesperson, Ike Phaahla, said the park also had dogs trained to hunt poachers. He said they had been found to be adept at sniffing out poachers, which had led to more than 90% of the arrests.

Last week, Freedom Ndlovu, 32, was sentenced by the Skukuza Regional Court for poaching-related offences. The court heard that in November 2016, field rangers from the park were patrolling the Stolznek region when they came into contact with three men.

The three noticed the rangers and managed to get away, but a helicopter and a tracker dog were brought in to assist.

Phaahla said the intruders were spotted and one was captured.

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