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Two suspects got arrested in possession of abalone worth R1.7 million

An Abalone worth R1.7 million was found during a car search on R300

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Cape Town - The City's Law Enforcement unit continues to arrest suspects for illegal poaching, a crime that, according to Mayco member for safety and security JP Smith, has been linked with firearms and drugs in the Western Cape.

Two suspects found in possession of abalone worth an estimated R1.7 million were arrested on Tuesday following a car search by the City's law enforcement team on the R300 highway.

Smith said officers stopped the car as it was driving without due consideration for fellow road users. Once the vehicle was stopped and the driver interviewed, officers detected a strong scent from the vehicle.

At first, not able to offer any reasonable explanation, the officers asked for permission from the driver to conduct a search.

“Fourteen large bags of abalone, already shucked and dried, were discovered in the vehicle. Both occupants were arrested under the Marine Living Resources Act and the vehicle seized for being used in the commission of a crime.

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“The established links between poaching, firearms and drugs are all underpinned by the organised gangs of the Western Cape, an aspect needing serious and urgent intervention.

“Already the City of Cape Town has made a dedicated investigative resource available to our local SAPS to assist with prosecuting the kingpins of these criminal organisations that are link to the overseas black markets.”

Despite warnings spanning more than a decade, Smith said there had been minimal progress in addressing the syndicates behind abalone and rock lobster poaching.

Spokesperson for Forestry, Fishery and Environment, Dave Bryant said: “The much-anticipated rock lobster enforcement strategy, which was supposed to have been signed off in March, had instead now been sent back for further consultations.

“Instead of targeting the poaching syndicates the national ruling party prefers to further curtail recreational fishing, which comprises a tiny percentage of catch and helps to grow tourism and the local economy.”



Suspect 1



Suspect 2

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