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Mozambican man sentenced to nine years in jail for hunting in the Kruger National Park

Thomas Yingwana, aged 35, was sentenced to an effected nine years in jail by the Skukuza Regional Court in Mpumalanga after he was arrested last year for hunting in the Kruger National Park. Photo: SAPS

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The Skukuza Regional Court in Mpumalanga sentenced 35-year-old Mozambican national Thomas Yingwana to nine years imprisonment for hunting in the Kruger National Park.

Police spokesperson in Mpumalanga, Brigadier Selvy Mohlala said Yingwana had illegally entered South Africa last year.

“The court heard how in November 2022, the accused entered the park before he was caught. It is said that during that month, field rangers were patrolling at Lower Sabie in the Kruger National Park when they spotted human footprints,” Mohlala said.

Upon tracing the footprints, the field rangers located Yingwana who was armed with a hunting firearm. He was also found in possession of ammunition as well as other items used in hunting.



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“Members of the police from Skukuza SA Police Service were notified about the incident and upon arrival the man was arrested and charged accordingly. He was brought before court and the State presented overwhelming evidence against him,” said Mohlala.

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On Wednesday, Yingwana pleaded guilty to the several charges levelled against him, and he was sentenced as follows:

- On count one, of trespassing, Yingwana was sentenced to two years imprisonment.
- On count two, contravention of the Immigration Act of South Africa, the Mozambican national was sentenced to one year imprisonment.
- On count three, possession of unlicensed firearm, Yingwana was sentenced to six years imprisonment.
- On count four, illegal possession of ammunition, the court sentenced Yingwana to two years imprisonment.
- On count five, possession of unlicensed firearm with an intention to commit crime, the Mozambican national was sentenced to four years imprisonment.
- On count six, possession of a dangerous weapon, the court sentenced Yingwana to a year in prison.

The Mozambican national was also declared unfit to possess a firearm.

The court ordered that sentences for count one and two will run concurrently, whereas sentences for count three, four and five will also run concurrently.

The two concurrent sentences will run consecutively with the sentence for count six — the one year in jail for possession of a dangerous weapon. Ultimately, Yingwana will effectively spend nine years in a South African prison.

Meanwhile, provincial commissioner of SAPS in Mpumalanga, Lieutenant General Semakaleng Daphney Manamela has welcomed the sentence, and appreciated the “excellent work” done by the rangers from [SA National Parks] SANParks, the investigation team, the prosecution team and the judiciary.

“I hope that the sentence will serve as a deterrence to others who might consider emulating the actions of the accused,” said Manamela.

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