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# Researcher highlights continuous rhino onslaught in South Africa

22 September 2023, 11:38 AM |



Prabashini Moodley | [@SABCNews](#)



*Image: Reuters*

*Rhinos are seen at the Buffalo Dream Ranch, the biggest private rhino sanctuary in the continent, in Klerksdorp in the North West.*

As the globe observes World Rhino Day, South Africa has lost 231 rhinos to poaching since the beginning of the year.

This is according to Lourens Leeuwnera, Senior Manager for Business and Wildlife portfolios at the Endangered Wildlife Trust.

World Rhino Day is aimed at raising awareness around all five rhino species and the work being done to save them.

South Africa is home to the majority of the world's rhino and it is no surprise that it has been the country hit hardest by poachers.

Leeuwner says there's a need to continue to remind the country about the dangers as endangered creatures continue to face and their desperate fight for survival.

Rhinos are poached for their horn, which is then sold in Asia to be used for a variety of reasons, including perceived aphrodisiac qualities.

Leeuwner says there's a [continuous onslaught on rhinos](#) in South Africa.

“Since 2008, there has been a complete onslaught on the rhinos in SA. We have just over 15 000 rhinos. The poaching has declined slightly this year compared to the same period last year, but its still very much an issue. We have lost 231 rhinos between January and June this year. You will find that in one reserve if the anti-poaching efforts are stepped up, they will just target another area. We also have these large areas to protect. If you think of Kruger National Park, it's almost 2 million hectares.”

### **Slight decline in rhino poaching**

Forestry, Fisheries and Environment Minister Barbara Creecy briefed the media in Pretoria last month on progress in efforts to combat rhino poaching.

The update came after the signing of an integrated strategy on wildlife trafficking.