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Technology making a significant impact in rhino poaching reduction

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Image: Reuters

Rhino seen at a nature reserve

The Kruger National Park (KNP) has reported that the implementation of technology has yielded significant results in reducing the frequency of rhino poaching incidents within the park.

As the world marked World Rhino Day last week Friday, statistics have provided encouraging signs, with the first six months of 2023 showing a slight decline in poaching numbers compared to the same period in 2022.

Specifically, there were 28 fewer rhino poaching incidents during this time frame. This marks a positive trend in efforts to protect these endangered creatures. Over the past 17 years, South Africa has [tragically lost 8,936 rhinos to poaching](#), and the rhino population in KNP has faced a stark decline of 60 percent since 2013.

Poaching still a concern in South Africa and other parts of Africa

spokesperson for KNP, Isaac Phaahla, attributes this progress to the successful integration of technology into anti-poaching efforts. He highlights the instrumental role played by cyber trackers and surveillance equipment, which have significantly bolstered the capabilities of park rangers in their tireless efforts to combat rhino poaching.

Phaahla explains, “The first thing we did to get technology up and running was to have fiber trackers for our rangers. This technology, originally used in conservation, was adapted to allow rangers to send us GPS coordinates when they encounter suspected poachers. This information enables us to dispatch response teams swiftly. The second aspect involved the introduction of a K9 unit, which was previously used in the past to track people.”

These technological enhancements have provided rangers with crucial tools to detect, track, and apprehend poachers, ultimately contributing to the reduction in rhino poaching incidents.

As a result, conservationists and authorities are cautiously optimistic about the future of rhinos in Kruger National Park and the broader South African wildlife community.