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Rhino poacher handed 30 years for killing three rhinos in Kruger National Park

Sydney Sibuyi, 40, was sentenced to 30 years in direct imprisonment for killing rhinos in Kruger National Park. Picture: Armand Hough/African News Agency (ANA) Archives

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An alleged rhino poacher has been sentenced to 30 years behind bars for killing three rhinos at [Kruger National Park in Skukuza](#).

Sydney Sibuyi, 40, was sentenced to thirty years of direct imprisonment in the Skukuza Regional Court on Thursday for poaching-related offences.

Sibuyi pleaded guilty to the crime and was subsequently convicted of trespassing at Kruger National Park in Skukuza for three counts of killing three rhinos and conspiracy to commit an offence.

Sibuyi's sentencing emanates from an incident that took place in July 2020, when rangers in Kruger National Park got information about three [suspected poachers](#).

They followed the lead and found Sibuyi in possession of five [fresh rhino horns](#). They continued the search and found three rhino carcasses in the vicinity.

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"This led to Sibuyi's arrest, and when observing him, it transpired that the T-shirt he was wearing had blood stains, which were taken for DNA analysis," NPA regional spokesperson Monica Nyuswa said.

Nyuswa further added that, in court, the accused pleaded guilty to all counts.

In aggravation of sentence, prosecutor Lot Mgiba presented DNA results, which confirmed that the blood stains found on the accused's T-shirt matched the carcass at the crime scene.

"Sibuyi was sentenced to thirty years of direct imprisonment. The court further declared the accused unfit to possess a firearm," Nyuswa said.

Nyuswa also said that the NPA is pleased with the sentence, and rhino poaching endangers not only the population of targeted animals but also other animals [in their ecosystem](#).

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