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## Three In Court After Found In Possession Of US\$11 395 Ivory

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**By Matabeleland North Correspondent**

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HWANGE: Three men suspected to be part of a poaching syndicate that has been illegally hunting elephants for their ivory at the Hwange National Park and Binga district both in Matabeleland North have been arrested after being found in possession of ivory worth US\$11 395.

Enos Mudenda (35) of Mankonkole village under Chief Saba in Binga, Joseph Ngwenya (32) of Siantele village in Chief Shana area in Hwange and Mark Sibanda (38) of Bulawayo's Mahatshula suburb appeared before Hwange magistrate Sekai Chiwundura to answer to a charge of illegal possession of elephant ivory.

The magistrate remanded the three in custody to next week Friday.

They face charges of violating the Parks and Wildlife Act.

The trio was arrested after anti-poaching teams got a tip-off that some people were in possession of ivory.

Police and rangers swooped and found the trio in possession of elephant tusks weighing 46.580kg valued at US\$11 395.

Mudenda, Ngwenya and Sibanda are also yet to appear in court on a separate charge after they were also found they were found in possession of an undisclosed amount of elephant tusks in Binga recently.

The trio led an anti-poaching team of police and rangers to the tusks in Binga after their arrest in Hwange.

Police are investigating other poaching incidents which the three are suspected to be linked to.

The cases come amid concerns over the prevalence of poaching in the country's game parks as well as escalating human-wildlife conflicts in areas adjacent to national parks.

Zimparks said the conflict is a result of overcrowding in game parks, with the Hwange National Park said to be having a way bigger population of elephants compared to its carrying capacity.