

Successful start for SANParks after 7 arrests made at start of 2020

SANParks CEO Fundisile Mketeni congratulated rangers who managed to arrest seven suspected rhino poachers in the first nine days of the year in their anti-poaching campaign in the Kruger National Park (KNP).



Image source: www.pixabay.com

The first group of three suspected poachers were arrested on 2 January 2020 in the Lower Sabie / Skukuza area of the park after an extended day-long follow up operation by rangers supported by K9 and air wing rapid reaction units. During the contact, which happened just before last light, a heavy calibre hunting rifle, ammunition and poaching equipment were recovered. A second group of three suspects was arrested on 7 January by a joint Stolznec and Pretoriuskop Ranger team with K9 and air wing rapid reaction support. This group were found in possession of a high calibre hunting rifle, ammunition and poaching equipment.

In the third incident on 9 January, rangers, once again supported by K9 and airwing rapid reaction elements, managed to make one arrest out of a group of three suspected rhino poachers after a lengthy follow-up operation in the Tshokwane section of the park.

Community support

Mketeni urged communities to continue cooperating with authorities and giving information that can help win this campaign. "These criminals reside in our neighbouring villages and we urge our neighbours to help us save jobs and create opportunities through tourism, because people come to the park to see these magnificent animals and if we lose them through the actions of these selfish individuals, we won't be an attraction anymore. Congratulations to the entire SANParks team and we thank you for your dedication, obedience and tenacity and we wish you a successful 2020," concluded Mketeni.

All suspects have been handed over to the SAPS for further investigation.

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