

# Apps alerting guest to wildlife sightings becoming a concern

The introduction of mobile applications that shares information on interesting animal sightings in national parks, particularly the iconic Kruger National Park, has become a major cause for concern for South African National Parks (SANParks). The use of these applications has resulted in an increased rate of lawlessness in the parks which includes congestion around sightings, speeding and road kills caused by guest rushing to and congregating around the sightings.



Conrad88 via [Wikimedia Commons](#)

This is according to SANParks managing executive: tourism development and marketing Hapiloe Sello, who said SANParks has been inundated with scores of customer complaints emanating from the use of these mobile applications.

According to Sello, since the arrival of these mobile apps, authorities have received a considerable increase in reports of speeding cases, road kills as well as road rage incidents at sightings. “As an organisation we appreciate the fact that technology has evolved and that guests are taking advantage of it, however, this is compromising the values of good game viewing in national parks.”

She said SANParks holds a leading position globally in the conservation of biodiversity and the management of eco-tourism. It would, therefore, be regrettable for SANParks to turn a blind eye to trends that reverse the gains made in these fields.”

“Most guests appreciate the leisurely drive through the parks and the potential reward of a good sighting as a key element of the visitor experience. This is an experience that SANParks commits to protecting and, therefore, the usage of these mobile applications is in direct contradiction to the ethos of responsible tourism espoused by SANParks.”

“We at SANParks discourage the use of these mobile applications as they tend to induce an unhealthy sense of eagerness for visitors to break the rules and, we are exploring legal mechanisms to curtail the use of sightings apps,” concludes Sello.

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