

Poachers kill more rhinos in SA to meet Asian demand

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South Africa has seen an increase in the number of rhinos illegally killed for their horns in the first half of 2022, as poachers shifted to hunting in private parks, the country's environment ministry said on Monday, 1 August.



Source: Reuters/Siphiwe Sibeko

Ten more rhinos were poached countrywide than in the first half of last year, taking the total to 259. Poaching in South Africa had already risen last year after a fall in 2020 linked to Covid-19 restrictions.

South Africa accounts for about half of the total endangered Black rhino population on the African continent and is also home to the world's largest population of White rhinos, whose status is "near-threatened" rather than endangered.



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"Recent trends in rhino poaching show a move away from the Kruger Park to private reserves and KwaZulu-Natal, where the majority of rhinos have been killed this year," environment minister Barbara Creecy said in a statement.

Rhino poaching often involves both local poachers and international criminal syndicates, who smuggle the horns across borders. The ministry said demand is particularly high in Asia.

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