



environmental affairs

Department:
Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Ref:02/1/5/2

MINISTER

QUESTION NO. 124 FOR WRITTEN REPLY: NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

A draft reply to Mr R K Purdon (DA) to the above-mentioned question is enclosed for your consideration.

**MS NOSIPHO NGCABA
DIRECTOR-GENERAL
DATE:**

DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/AMENDED

**MRS B E E MOLEWA, MP
MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS
DATE:**

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

(For written reply)

QUESTION NO. 124 {NW129E}

INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 1 of 2017

DATE OF PUBLICATION: 09 February 2017

Mr R K Purdon (DA) to ask the Minister of Environmental Affairs:

- (1) Whether she has found that the Kruger National Park is losing more rhinos than it can breed;
- (2) whether accurate figures on poaching statistics are available for the 2015-16 financial year; if not, why not; if so, are the figures publicly available;
- (2) Whether the total number of poached rhinos has been added to the number of rhinos lost due to natural deaths; if so, what is the percentage of poached rhinos to the total rhino population in the specified park? NW129E

124. THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS REPLIES:

- (1) There were different findings for different periods affecting the financial years 2015/16 and 2016/17, due to the times at which the census are being undertaken.

According to the results of the last census that was conducted in September 2016, of which indicated that the total number of rhinos that were lost by the KNP as a result of poaching and natural mortalities exceeded the number of Rhinos that were born in the period September 2015 – September 2016. Note that the natural deaths numbers in the period September 2015 - September 2016 doubled as a result of the unprecedented drought.

The total number of rhinos poached in Sept 2014 – Sept 2015 Rhino was 870, as compared to 682 that were poached in Sept 2015 – Sept 2016 Rhino. This shows a reduction of 188 rhinos poached representing a 21.6 % reduction in poaching.

During the period Sept 2014 – Sept 2015 natural mortalities were 91 rhino, as compared to 169 in the period Sept 2015 – Sept 2016 Rhino. This shows an increase of 78 natural mortalities representing an increase of 46.1 %. The latter can be attributed to the effects of unprecedented drought experienced.

In the same token, in the previous census period of September 2014 to September 2015 the death rates as it relates to both poaching and natural mortalities was found to be in par with the birth rate.

Additional information:

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MONTH & YEAR	POACHED	NATURAL MORTALITIES	REMOVED RHINOS (translocations, orphans, humane euthanasia)	BIRTHS** (BIRTH RANGES)
Sept 2014 – Sept 2015 Rhino	870 ¹	91 [#]	76	754 - 852
Sept 2015 – Sept 2016 Rhino	682 ²	169 ^{\$}	180	436 - 933

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818 white rhinos, 52 black rhinos

² 639 white rhinos, 43 black rhinos

[#] 80 white rhino and 11 black rhino carcasses detected

^{\$}158 white rhino and 11 black rhino carcasses detected

^{##} Proportion of rhinos seen that are <1 year old. That means those that were born and survived the first year

(2) Yes, accurate figures on poaching statistics for the 2015-16 financial year are available, however, it should be noted that statistics related to rhino are reported in line with calendar years rather than financial years in order to align with international reporting mechanisms. The statistics in question are released by the Minister on a regular basis, with the last released in september 2016. The Minister will soon release the annual statistics for 2016 inclusive of the last quarter of the year.

(3) No, the number of rhinos poached is reported separately from those lost due to natural causes.

Additional information

RHINO LOSES			
April - Dec 2015		Jan – March 2016	
Poach	Natural	Poach	Natural
601	127	171	44

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