

S.Africa park sees first ivory poaching in over decade

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An environmental crime investigator walks past the carcass of a rhino killed by poachers in South Africa's Kruger National Park on November 27, 2013

South Africa's Kruger National Park which is battling a high number of rhino killings has recorded its first case of elephant poaching in over a decade, a spokesman said Friday.

The elephant bull had its tusk hacked off when it was discovered by

rangers on Thursday.

"It is the first case of ivory poaching in the Kruger in over ten years," said spokesman Ike Phaahla, adding that the animal might have been killed at the beginning of the month.

Ivory poaching is rife on the African continent but South Africa had yet to be affected by the scourge.

Neighbouring Zimbabwe and Mozambique had reported a surge, including cases where some animals were killed by [cyanide poisoning](#).

Kruger Park boasts a 16,700 elephant populations, according to a 2012 count.

The head of the South African National Parks rangers, Johan Jooste, indicated that bull was purposefully shot for its tusks.

He said rangers patrolling the area noticed footprints of approximately four individuals leading towards Mozambique leaving the park.

The park's borders, shared with Mozambique, are patrolled by the South African army to help fight rhino poaching, as poachers often smuggle horns across the border.

Since the beginning of the year, 245 rhinos have been killed in the Kruger.

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