

# Namibian government dehorns rhino to curb poaching

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In a radical move, the Namibian government began the campaign last month to dehorn most of its endangered black rhinos to discourage poachers, and was set to complete it by early 2015

The Namibian government is dehorning most of its endangered black rhinos in order to discourage poachers, a spokesperson said Monday.

The radical move comes after several reports exposed a spike in rhino poaching in Africa, spreading now to the sparsely populated Namibia in

the southwest of the continent.

Environment ministry spokesman Romeo Muyunda told AFP that the [government](#) began the campaign last month and was set to complete it by early 2015.

"The dehorning process was initiated to discourage poachers," he said.

Muyunda added that Namibia has around 2,000 rhino—mostly of the rare black rhino species—and most were set to be dehorned.

Recent Namibian media reports point to plans by the Namibian government to sell the horns commercially, a move that still needs the approval of international wildlife institutions.

The government plans to fund the ministry's Wildlife Trust to help conservancies all over Namibia, notably to strengthen their security.

Environment Minister Uahekua Herunga spoke out strongly against poachers two weeks ago, encouraging Namibians to "be a police officer, to be a soldier against poaching in this country."

The environment ministry said in May that 11 [rhinos](#) have been killed since 2010.

Namibia has 79 conservation areas covering more than 100,000 square kilometres (40,000 square miles) and inhabited by some 300,000 people.

Several [poachers](#) have been arrested in recent years, with the latest suspects being two Asian men who were held in March allegedly in possession of rhino horn worth around \$230,000 (185,000 euros).

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