

NATIONAL REPORT

for the Year 2021



Wildlife Protection and Law Enforcement



in Namibia



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This report covers the period 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021



Criminals are members of the public –

when the public is vigilant and reports suspicious behaviour and openly condemns all crime, criminal activities become very difficult.

Crime becomes near impossible when good people from all sectors work together to fight it.

Report wildlife crime via sms at this number: 55 555

[all messages are strictly confidential]



Ministry
of Environment, Forestry and Tourism

Namibian
Police Force

Office
of the Prosecutor General





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I. INTRODUCTION

This report represents the third edition of annual wildlife-crime reporting at a national level in Namibia. In its revised format applied for 2021, the report recognises the important roles played by a range of government agencies, NGOs, funding partners, communities and the private sector. At the same time, the report shines a light on the complexity and serious impacts of wildlife crime by providing comprehensive data and detailed analyses. It is clear that organised wildlife crime requires coordinated, strategic countermeasures. Together, Namibian stakeholders are working towards creating a national wildlife protection and law-enforcement framework that enables healthy wildlife populations and stringent law enforcement in Namibia.

Within the Namibian Partnerships against Environmental Crime, three government agencies form the integrated focal points of wildlife protection and law enforcement:

- The **Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism** is the custodian of wildlife and other terrestrial natural resources and has wildlife management and protection as a core mandate.
- The **Namibian Police Force** is mandated with maintaining law and order, including laws related to wildlife.
- The **Office of the Prosecutor General** is responsible for prosecuting suspects in the name of the state in criminal proceedings, including those related to wildlife crimes.

To counter the unprecedented threat of ongoing, highly organised poaching of high-value species, the **Namibian Defence Force** is playing a unique role within its mandate of defending the state and its resources against threats. Other government agencies and numerous non-government entities also make vital contributions to protecting Namibia's natural resources and supporting

law enforcement. The work of all of these sectors and entities is elaborated on in this report.

When wildlife crime began to escalate rapidly in Namibia over the past decade, we were forced to adapt and innovate, and implement new approaches and systems. The most important adjustment has been to increase interagency collaboration. The nexus for this is created by the Blue Rhino Task Team, a formal partnership between the MEFT Intelligence and Investigation Unit and the NAMPOL Protected Resources Division, which works closely with regional MEFT, NAMPOL and NDF units, the Office of the Prosecutor General, Financial Intelligence Centre, Anti-Corruption Commission, Namibian Revenue Agency and other partners. Activities are guided by the National Strategy on Wildlife Protection and Law Enforcement 2021–25, and seek to consolidate the achievements and progress made over the past five years.

Namibian wildlife crime reporting is underpinned by hard data, which unflinchingly portrays results and enables the presentation of wildlife crime and law enforcement trends. Comprehensive data compilation, analysis and publication are made possible through the strong interagency collaboration that channels data from various sources into the Integrated Database of Wildlife Crime in Namibia (see p. 16)

No illusions should be entertained that we have stopped wildlife crime in Namibia or are on the verge of doing so. As long as there is a high-paying demand somewhere and Namibia has the products – albeit illegal – to supply that demand, some crime will take place. Namibia is simply too vast – and our natural resources are too plentiful – to be able to protect all of them, everywhere, all of the time. Yet we are making it increasingly difficult for perpetrators to evade the law. The data shows that offenders will have to face justice.


..... 18 MAR 2022
TEOFILUS NGHITILA
Office of the
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT,
FORESTRY AND TOURISM



..... 24 MAR 2022
S.H. NDEITUNGA, OMS
INSPECTOR GENERAL: NAMIBIAN POLICE FORCE


Communities are actively opposing crime and reporting incidents. Suspects are regularly apprehended even before they manage to carry out their intended crimes, particularly when targeting rhinos. Other perpetrators are still being arrested years after committing a crime, as investigations into old cases continue – and fugitives can't hide forever. Public office bearers committing or facilitating wildlife crimes are being arrested without fear or favour, and are receiving impartial treatment by the law. Not only poachers, but entire syndicates, including dealers, aiders and abettors, and even international kingpins, are being arrested and prosecuted.

The proceeds of crime are being seized by law enforcement and are being forfeited to the state. Criminals are losing their vehicles and other assets used to commit these crimes. The Prevention of Organised Crime Act is being applied to counter organised wildlife crime and related financial transgressions. Such charges are extremely serious and the penalties are severe. The sentences handed down by our courts are more and more reflecting the seriousness of the crimes being committed.

Wildlife crime is a worldwide problem, with criminal networks reaching across international borders and continents to span the globe. Namibia is actively collaborating with its direct neighbours and authorities further afield to counter this scourge. International partnerships and intersectoral collaboration are now more crucial than ever, as Namibia – and the world – face a growing array of challenges. Wildlife crime is constantly adapting to countermeasures, both at a local and global scale. Climate change is affecting our environments and livelihoods. Socio-economic hurdles are ever-present. To compound matters, we continue to be confronted with a myriad of existential issues induced by a global pandemic that keeps evolving. By working together at all levels with innovation and adaptability, we can overcome these obstacles.



Adv. OLYVIA M.IMALWA
PROSECUTOR GENERAL - REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



Wildlife protection is the mandate of the MEFT



NAMPOL enforces the laws, including those related to wildlife



Criminal offences are prosecuted by the Office of the PG



2. WILDLIFE PROTECTION AND LAW ENFORCEMENT STATUS SUMMARY FOR 2021

2.1 The year 2021

The year 2021 has continued to confront our world with a myriad of challenges precipitated by a global pandemic that keeps evolving. COVID-19 infections in Namibia caused significant fatalities and intense grief during the year. The effects on personal health, individual livelihoods, various business sectors and the national economy will be felt for a long time to come. While these factors have had an impact on wildlife conservation, protection and law enforcement in a variety of ways, wildlife crime trends have generally continued the downward trajectory recorded in 2020. The number of high-value-species cases registered increased slightly in 2021, yet numbers in other categories continue to go down (see pp. 18–28, 36–63). The status of the fundamental pillars of wildlife conservation, protection and law enforcement, and the status of key species, generally remains secure despite a range of challenges (see also pp. 14–15).

2.2 Status of fundamental pillars

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

Over the past three decades Namibia has built effective conservation systems and approaches, including a strong legislative framework, a broad network of state-protected, community and freehold conservation areas, and a variety of conservation initiatives and incentives. These have been enhanced through innovative conservation approaches and interventions, including targeted translocations of species to re-establish historic ranges, and the sustainable use of natural resources. The pandemic has created a variety of conservation challenges, with the loss of tourism and conservation-hunting revenue particularly severe. A range of initiatives has sought to mitigate these impacts, yet challenges certainly lie ahead for conservation. These are not insurmountable and the fundamental conservation systems and approaches currently remain secure.

WILDLIFE PROTECTION

The sudden escalation of wildlife crime over the past decade has required new wildlife protection measures not seen in the past. The deployment of national security forces to priority national parks continues to provide an effective deterrent to poaching, while anti-poaching initiatives such as Rhino Rangers and other APUs in community and freehold conservation areas are also effective. Population monitoring forms a key component of conservation and wildlife protection measures.

Regular censuses are done, including detailed helicopter block counts that assess the status of rhino populations. Dehorning is an effective poaching deterrent that was first applied in Namibia in the late 1980s and early '90s. Systematic dehorning of vulnerable animals has again been carried out for the past eight years. Community involvement in wildlife protection is vital and is being strengthened through a variety of campaigns.

WILDLIFE LAW ENFORCEMENT

Law enforcement forms the frontline of measures to counter wildlife crime. The park deployment anti-poaching partnership between the MEFT, NAMPOL and the NDF was formally expanded to law enforcement interventions in 2018. This is executed via the focal point of the Blue Rhino Task Team through the regional units of all three agencies. Intelligence-led investigations have produced significant results, including high rates of arrests and seizures, and a notable percentage of pre-emptive arrests. Relentless investigations ensure that important arrests also continue to be made in older cases. Close collaboration between NAMPOL, MEFT and the PG-ECU is helping to ensure that perpetrators are not just arrested, but are prosecuted and appropriately punished. Data on arrests, seizures and prosecutions forms the core focus of this report.

INTERSECTORAL COOPERATION

Active collaboration between the various government agencies mandated with wildlife conservation, protection and law enforcement forms the basis of effective interventions. These are supported and enhanced by NGOs, international funding partners, local communities and the private sector. (See details regarding Namibian Partnerships against Environmental Crime pp. 65–67)

2.3 Status of key species

ELEPHANT

Namibia's elephant population has been steadily increasing and expanding into former ranges over the past three decades, and is currently estimated at around 24,000 animals. After a peak in poaching in 2016, losses have been curbed to low levels that have a negligible impact on population health. Tusk seizures are nonetheless high and increasing, with much of the ivory originating from outside Namibia. The updated National Elephant Management Plan was finalised in 2021.

RHINOS

We need to be reminded that the white rhino became locally extinct in what is today Namibia around the 1850s and was reintroduced from South Africa. A viable population has been rebuilt over the past half century, yet this remains disjointed and particularly susceptible to poaching impacts. The IUCN reclassified Namibia's black rhino population from Vulnerable to Near Threatened in 2020, recognising that due to sound management it is currently at a reduced risk of extinction. Poaching losses have been substantially reduced from the peak experienced in 2015, yet impacts continue to threaten small, isolated populations.

PANGOLIN

Pangolins continue to be the most-targeted high-value species in Namibia. The impacts on the population are currently not known, but focussed research is being carried out via the Namibian Pangolin Working Group to assess the national population status and formulate an appropriate management plan. (See details regarding the status and protection of pangolin p. 40, elephant p. 46, and rhinos p. 54)

2.4 Implementation of the national strategy

Namibia introduced the Revised National Strategy on Wildlife Protection and Law Enforcement¹ at the start of 2021. The strategy covers a five-year period until the end of 2025. Key initiatives set out for the first year of the strategy have been implemented, including:

- Strengthen MEFT Wildlife Protection Services Division
- Strengthen MEFT Intelligence and Investigation Unit
 - additional staff appointments
- Strengthen PG Environmental Crimes Unit
- Strengthen transboundary cooperation
- Ensure ongoing flexible financing for intelligence and investigations
- Strengthen information networks
- Strengthen National Forensic Laboratory
- Decentralise wildlife product valuation to regions
- Provide needs-based training for key personnel
- Counter corruption within wildlife protection and law enforcement
- Formulate National Elephant Management Plan
- Formulate National Pangolin Management Plan
- Establish Namibian Pangolin Working Group
- Establish Wildlife Crime Communications Working Group
- Publish weekly, monthly & annual wildlife crime reports
- Implement environmental awareness campaign
- Establish national stakeholder forums



Effective wildlife conservation represents the foundation of all wildlife management interventions.



Protecting wildlife against organised poaching is challenging.



Law enforcement is the frontline of countering organised wildlife crime.



3. KEY CHARACTERISTICS, ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS SUMMARY FOR 2021

3.1 Characteristics of the year

While a significant decrease in registered wildlife crime cases and arrests was recorded in 2020, there has again been an increase in some sectors during 2021. Compared to 2020, the overall number of registered cases has decreased by only 4.1 per cent, while arrests have decreased by 8.7 per cent. The number of registered cases related to high-value species has increased by 26.1 per cent (caused mainly by increases in pangolin and ivory trafficking). Cases related to high-value species made up 39 per cent of all registered cases. The numbers of elephant and rhinos known to have been poached in Namibia during 2021 remain similar to those of 2020, but seizures of pangolin and ivory increased by 14.7 and 66.1 per cent, respectively. It is important to note that much of the ivory seized in Namibia originates from elephants killed in other countries. Seizures of pangolin and ivory remain below peaks recorded in 2019. The number of rhino horns seized by law enforcement remains noteworthy – of the rhinos poached over the past two years, about a quarter of the horns have been recovered (not all horns have been directly matched to carcasses). This is an important success, particularly when combined with the substantial number of pre-emptive arrests (46 in 2020, 24 in 2021). Rhino crime is clearly a risky venture in Namibia. Many perpetrators are caught before they can kill a rhino; of those who do manage to poach, the contraband is seized in one of four cases – and the poachers and colluders are arrested. Meat poaching is an issue of great concern right across Namibia, and is receiving focussed attention by law enforcement. Meat-poaching cases made up 49.9 per cent of all cases registered in 2021. After a peak in 2019 registered cases nonetheless declined by 18.2 per cent in 2020, and then by 14 per cent in 2021.

3.2 Activities

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

Human–wildlife conflict

Next to wildlife crime, human–wildlife conflict is one of the most pressing conservation issues in Namibia. Wildlife is distributed right across the country and includes the occurrence of large predators, elephant, buffalo, crocodile, hippopotamus and other potentially problematic species in some communal and freehold farming areas. Some people are killed each year in unfortunate incidents with elephant, crocodile or

hippo. Herbivores may cause considerable crop losses, while predators may cause substantial livestock losses. Disgruntled farming communities may take pre-emptive or retaliatory actions by killing problem animals or shooting at them to chase them away from crops or infrastructure. Conflict with lions in northwestern Namibia was one of the most high-profile issues during 2021, exacerbated by years of drought that had decimated the predator's prey base. Diverse mitigating measures included translocating some emaciated lions out of the area. Elephant conflicts have been escalating in several hotspots in different parts of the country, where farming communities experience regular damage to crops and water infrastructure. To reduce some of this pressure, various mitigating measures have been implemented, including the live capture and sale of elephants from conflict hotspots. Unmitigated human–wildlife conflict has been shown to be a driver of wildlife crime amongst disgruntled communities².

Species management

Priority species, which are rare and vulnerable to human impacts, have specific habitat preferences or other special conservation needs, require careful management interventions. Status assessments are carried out for such species at regular intervals through population censuses and targeted research. Management plans formulated for priority species in the past have been updated for key species such as elephant, while new management plans are being drawn up for species requiring urgent interventions, such as pangolin. The Namibian Pangolin Working Group is initiating targeted research on pangolin. Rhinos continue to receive focussed management attention through strategic translocations and other management interventions.

WILDLIFE PROTECTION

Anti-poaching

Active anti-poaching initiatives are the core of modern wildlife protection. Government, conservancy and private sector anti-poaching deployments around the country remain at the same high level as in previous years. The deployment of MEFT dog units has been expanded to cover a broader range of priority areas. Targeted dehorning operations were again carried out in 2021 in vulnerable rhino ranges, with a total of 115 animals dehorned. In 2020, 195 animals were dehorned, adjusted from the initially reported target

of 216. Dehorning needs to be repeated at regular intervals. The horns are kept at secure storage facilities of the MEFT. Initiatives to raise community awareness and involvement in countering wildlife crime are ongoing. Work on a far-reaching awareness campaign to celebrate three decades of conservation success in Namibia and raise awareness of the negative impacts of wildlife crime was carried out throughout the year.

WILDLIFE LAW ENFORCEMENT

Investigations and prosecutions

The primary focus of this report is to provide comprehensive data and interpretive information on investigations, arrests, seizures and prosecutions, as well as other pertinent aspects of countering wildlife crime. The Integrated Database of Wildlife Crime in Namibia enables the presentation of such detailed data, which is used to create a better public understanding of the complexities and challenges of law enforcement, and the successes achieved in countering crime.

National Predator Task Team

The keeping of large predators in captivity without required permits from the MEFT, as well as captive breeding of those predators, are of increasing concern. Captive breeding of predators is illegal in Namibia. It often leads to illicit trading of live animals, or the trafficking of animal parts. To actively counter such illegal activity, the National Predator Task Team has been formed. The NPTT investigated a number of illegal sites during 2021, and a number of individuals have been charged with transgressions.



Meat-poaching made up half of all cases registered in 2021; poached antelopes, eastern Namibia, August 2021



Human-wildlife conflict may lead to wildlife crime; poisoned lion, northwestern Namibia, October 2021.

Crime prevention versus prosecution

The ideal way to eliminate crime is to remove the stimuli that drive it. Yet the drivers of crime can be extremely complex, with a range of motivations playing a role (see also pp. 31–35). Wildlife crime is an intricate global criminal sector driven by a massive demand for diverse illicit products. The markets for high-value products (with a value high enough to make trafficking along international supply chains worthwhile) are mostly in foreign countries far away from the source of the products. Removing key drivers of illicit trade becomes very difficult under these circumstances. It involves changing community needs and attitudes towards wildlife in the source country, but also requires eliminating high demand in the end-market country.

As the name indicates, wildlife crime is a transgression against the laws that protect wild animals. When a criminal sector rapidly expands, law enforcement is the frontline of countering it – as it is committed. Other interventions, such as community awareness, poverty alleviation or demand reduction, are long-term aims, which are rarely achievable quickly enough to protect wildlife before populations are decimated.

The response to sudden spikes in wildlife crime (as Namibia has experienced over the past decade) must consist of a holistic approach that includes broad stakeholder engagement, strengthening of conservation systems and wildlife protection, but has the arrest and prosecution of perpetrators as an immediate aim.



INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION

Efforts are ongoing to strengthen the cooperation between the government agencies mandated with wildlife conservation, protection and law enforcement, as well as ensuring broad collaboration with other key stakeholders. Closer collaboration between the MEFT, NAMPOL, NDF, Office of the PG, Financial Intelligence Centre, Namibian Revenue Agency and key NGOs was achieved during 2021. Of particular importance was the strengthening of regional MEFT–WPSD, NAMPOL–PRSD and NDF units responsible for wildlife protection and law enforcement, and strengthening of the PG–ECU to elevate the effectiveness of prosecution.

Strengthening of regional units

The regional units of the MEFT–WPSD, NAMPOL–PRSD and NDF create the foundation of national efforts to counter wildlife crime. Personnel from these units work together to counter crime in their regions as it occurs, with support from the BRTT and other central agencies. Diverse support was provided for regional units during 2021, such as securing facilities, providing technical equipment, strengthening information networks, supplying vehicles and training personnel.

Strengthening of the PG–ECU

The Office of the Prosecutor General's Environmental Crimes Unit was considerably strengthened with the appointment of a Head of Unit in January 2021. This has facilitated a range of initiatives including ongoing support to wildlife crime investigators and regional prosecutors, docket preparation support, as well as a focussed docket clean-up campaign to expedite the finalisation of wildlife crime court cases. Close liaison with the Asset Forfeiture and Money Laundering Units of the Office of the PG further strengthens the investigation–prosecution interface.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Appropriate capacities for conservation, wildlife protection and law enforcement agencies to carry out their mandated duties are a vital component of effective interventions. During 2021, a variety of capacity building interventions were carried out in the following spheres:

Tools, technologies and equipment for law enforcement

Use of the latest technologies and equipment, combined with a range of modern and traditional tools, has been a game-changer for wildlife crime law enforcement. Diverse support for central and regional offices is facilitating effective interventions by law enforcement personnel. This has included vehicles, computer and surveillance technologies, and a range of tactical gear.

Training

A variety of training and personal capacity-building initiatives were carried out during the year. These included training in the use of the latest surveillance technologies, data management and analysis, financial investigations, case-docket preparation and evidence presentation. The courses were presented by international and local experts, with MEFT, NAMPOL, NDF, FIC and NAMRA personnel being the key recipients. In addition, targeted bursaries to enhance individual expertise were provided to law enforcement and other personnel countering wildlife crime.

Information materials

Comprehensive information materials continue to be produced to support investigations and prosecution, to raise awareness about the impacts of wildlife crime, and to portray the work of organisations countering wildlife crime. During 2021 information materials have included the launch of the *Namibia Rapid Response Guide on Investigation and Prosecution of Wildlife Crime*, as well as related materials.

3.3 Events

INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGES

South Africa

Two exchanges between the BRTT and the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (Hawks) of the South African Police Service took place during the year to share information and lessons learnt, strengthen ties and discuss joint investigations and modalities on how to combat wildlife trafficking between Namibia and South Africa.

KAZA

During the fourth quarter of 2021, country representatives of the Kavango–Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area met to discuss the establishment of a KAZA-level wildlife crime database and the sharing of wildlife crime data.

Angola

The 21st session of the Angola–Namibia Joint Commission on Defence and Security was held during the year. This resulted in constructive exchanges regarding wildlife crime and related security issues.

Botswana

The 29th session of the Botswana–Namibia Joint Commission on Defence and Security was held during the year. This resulted in constructive exchanges regarding wildlife crime and related security issues.



Community support is vital in countering wildlife crime. When a local cattle herder tending livestock north of Etosha National Park discovered a rhino which had recently died of natural causes, he immediately informed the nearest MEFT office. This entailed walking a considerable distance and climbing a tall tree to reach mobile phone reception. Regional MEFT-WPSD and NAMPOL-PRSD personnel immediately attended to the incident. The herder pointed out the carcass and handed the horns over to the investigators. All rhino horns from seizures and dehorning operations are registered and stored at secure government premises.



4. KEY SECTORS AND NOTEWORTHY CASES SUMMARY FOR 2021

4.1 Investigations and arrests

RAPID RESPONSE CAPABILITIES

One of the key factors facilitating law enforcement successes is the capability to respond rapidly to incidents of any nature. This has enabled a number of pre-emptive arrests of poaching gangs targeting rhinos, as well as rapid follow-up arrests of poachers who have managed to kill rhinos. These rapid response capabilities are facilitated through flexible external funding and technical support that is channelled directly to the law enforcement operations of the mandated government agencies. In a rhino poaching case registered in January 2021, it was possible to arrest all 6 key suspects within 48 hours of the poaching incident.

PRE-EMPTIVE ARRESTS

Pre-emptive arrests continue to be one of the most important and satisfying law-enforcement outcomes during investigations related to rhinos. During 2021 7 pre-emptive cases were registered, resulting in 24 arrests. The poaching gangs were targeting different rhino ranges, including Etosha National Park and a number of private reserves. The suspects are being prosecuted on charges of conspiracy to poach rhinos, illegal possession of firearms, illegal entry into protected areas, and other transgressions. Under Namibian law, conspiracy to commit a crime is treated with the same seriousness as actually committing the crime. While poaching gangs planning to poach elephant have been arrested in isolated cases in the Zambezi region, pre-emptive arrests are rarely possible related to a conspiracy to poach others species.

ARRESTS IN OLD CASES

Investigations into old cases are ongoing. A substantial number of arrests in cases registered prior to 2021 could be carried out during the year. One such arrest involved a suspect who was first arrested in 2016 in a case of possession of rhino horns. At the time, further investigations linked him to a previous rhino poaching case registered in 2015. The suspect was released on bail, but immediately absconded and skipped the country. Ongoing surveillance enabled his immediate arrest when he returned to Namibia in April 2021. Three other suspects in the 2015 case had already been arrested in 2020. Clearly there is no hiding from the law in Namibia.

ARRESTS OF INSIDERS

In a number of cases, the people mandated with protecting valuable wildlife have been arrested in connection with poaching or trafficking that wildlife. The involvement of insiders who supply information to criminal gangs, or in many cases carry out crimes themselves, is an unfortunate worldwide problem. Several members of the Namibian security forces, as well as personnel from private nature reserves, were arrested for their involvement in rhino poaching or trafficking during 2021. The arrest of members of the security forces and other insiders highlights the fact that all perpetrators of wildlife crimes are being prosecuted without fear or favour. It is also important to note that such perpetrators are no more than a few 'rotten apples', that turn up in all sectors of human endeavour. In the wildlife conservation and protection sphere they are swiftly apprehended. Additional measures have been put in place to maintain the integrity of Namibia's security forces and eliminate all involvement in illicit activities.

SEIZURE OF VEHICLES AND FIREARMS

The seizure of vehicles, firearms and other property used in the commission of a crime (i.e. used while committing a crime) is an important aspect of law enforcement. The confiscation of illegal firearms and ammunition is particularly important in removing illegal weapons from circulation and thus facilitating public safety and national security. The forfeiture of expensive vehicles to the state serves as a substantial additional penalty for perpetrators and should act as a considerable crime deterrent. During 2021, 18 firearms and 25 vehicles were seized as part of wildlife crime law enforcement operations. Numerous additional items including spears, pangas, knives, gin traps, snares and other 'tools of the trade' were also seized.

4.2 Prosecution and sentencing

IMPORTANT SENTENCES

Of the 287 convictions in 359 cases of individual suspects concluded during 2021, the following sentences are particularly noteworthy:

Charge:

- Illegal possession/trafficking of python [04.21]*

Sentence:

- N\$ 70,000 or 36 months imprisonment

Charge:

- Illegal possession/trafficking of pangolin [01.21]

Sentence:

- N\$ 200,000 or 48 months imprisonment

Charge:

- Illegal possession/trafficking of rhino horn [02.21]

Sentence:

- N\$ 500,000 or 24 months imprisonment
- forfeiture of BMW used in crime

RAPID CONCLUSION OF COURT CASES

Of the cases of individual suspects concluded during 2021, the short duration of these cases stands out:

Charge:

- Illegal possession/trafficking of pangolin [03.21]*

Case duration:

- 11 days between arrest and conviction

Charge:

- Illegal possession/trafficking of pangolin [10.21]

Case duration:

- 13 days between arrest and conviction

Charge:

- Illegal possession/trafficking of ivory [04.21]

Case duration:

- 91 days between arrest and conviction

* Indicates month and year of sentence



Pre-emptive arrests usually include the seizure of firearms and other 'tools of the trade'.



The forfeiture of expensive vehicles used in crime is a significant additional penalty for perpetrators



Disrupting rhino syndicates and trafficking routes

Over the past five years, Namibian wildlife protection and law enforcement has undergone a transformation from reactive to proactive interventions. From a scenario of intermittent discoveries of rhino carcasses resulting in investigations with few leads and low arrest rates, interventions are now apprehending a substantial number of suspects within days of an incident, while others are still being arrested years later as old cases are reinvestigated. Effective monitoring is resulting in the rapid discovery of poached animals, as well as enabling pre-emptive interventions. Poaching gangs are regularly intercepted before they are able to kill an animal. The suspects are prosecuted for conspiracy to poach while the targeted rhinos are saved.

These law enforcement interventions have dismantled rhino syndicates and disrupted trafficking routes. While poaching losses have been curbed appreciably, arrests and seizures have substantially increased. Arrests have not only apprehended poaching gangs, but a range of colluders, middlemen, and important local and international kingpins. This has forced poachers to seek new buyers and trafficking routes, bringing them to the attention of law enforcement, and resulting in further arrests and the recovery of some rhino horns. Over the past three years, 136 rhinos have been poached, while 354 suspects have been arrested and 44 horns seized. The risk–reward ratio is shifting in favour of law enforcement.



APPEALS AGAINST INAPPROPRIATE SENTENCES

The PG–ECU aims to enhance sound jurisprudence in Namibia by promoting effective prosecution and appropriate penalties for perpetrators of wildlife crimes. During 2021, the PG–ECU lodged appeals in the High Court in a number of cases that were finalised, but where the sentences passed were considered unsatisfactory. In some of the cases, the courts failed to make mandatory orders, which is detrimental to the development of the law in Namibia. The sentences that were passed do not complement the legislature, which took heed of the steep increase in organised, high-value wildlife crime and the related public outcry to amended the penalty clauses for specially-protected species. The appeal process provides an opportunity to redress these shortcomings and increase awareness of the seriousness of wildlife crime.

4.3 Targeted species

MEAT POACHING

In the perception of many farming communities in Namibia, meat poaching is out of control. Yet at a national level, cases related to meat poaching have been showing a clear downward trend since a peak in 2019. Over the past 2 years, registered cases have decreased by 29.2 per cent. Case numbers nonetheless remain high and meat poaching made up half of all registered cases during 2021 (see details pp. 36–39).

HIGH-VALUE SPECIES POACHING/TRAFFICKING

Pangolin

Pangolin poaching remains one of the most challenging sectors of wildlife protection, showing the most alarming trafficking trend of any species. The increases in pangolin seizures in Namibia over the past few years mirror international seizure trends, yet the drivers of local pangolin trafficking remain poorly understood (see details pp. 40–45).

Elephant

While elephant-poaching losses in Namibia have been reduced to low levels, seizures of ivory trafficked into Namibia remain high. After a significant dip in the number of tusks seized in 2020, seizures for 2021 have picked up substantially, representing the third-highest year since 2015. While a downward trend in the number of elephants poached across Africa has been recorded since a peak in 2011, poaching in southern Africa has been increasing since 2016. Over the past decade, about 45 per cent of Africa's poached elephants were killed in southern Africa³. At least some of this ivory is being trafficked via Namibia (see details pp. 46–53).

Rhinos

Rhino-poaching losses have been reduced appreciably since a peak in 2015, yet losses remain disturbing. As poaching has decimated rhino populations across Africa, South Africa and Namibia have become the primary targets. The two countries are now home to the largest rhino populations left in Africa. Significant law enforcement successes have been achieved in recent years, which have dismembered poaching gangs and disrupted syndicates, yet a relentless demand continues to drive poaching (see details pp. 54–63).

Large predators

Africa's large predators have always held a special fascination for people. Lions, leopards and cheetahs are deeply entrenched in human culture as symbols of power, agility, speed and courage. Large cats and their products thus have a significant commercial value, which is being exploited by both legal and illicit sectors. Hyaenas and African wild dogs do not have the same allure as the large cats, but nonetheless have some commercial value. The use of captive predators as tourist attractions has flourished in Namibia, as has the popularity of large cats as trophy-hunting targets. While it is legal to keep large cats in captivity if strict permit conditions are met, captive breeding is illegal. Similarly, the legal hunting of large cats is regulated by strict legislation and reporting requirements. Under the auspices of the National Predator Task Team formed in 2021, transgressions against these laws are receiving focussed attention.

Human–predator conflict incidents

Conflicts between livestock farmers and large predators continue to present massive challenges for conservation, wildlife protection and rural livelihoods. The severe drought experienced in northwestern Namibia over the past several years has had a massive impact on ungulate populations in the region. This has had a knock-on effect on predators, which have been deprived of their prey base. A significant number of retaliatory killings of large predators occurs in Namibia each year. Depending on the circumstances and the species, these may be illegal and are actively investigated.

Reptiles

The illicit trade in live reptiles, as well as in reptile parts, is a worldwide problem. While lizards and snakes are widely trafficked, turtles and tortoises are the most-seized live reptiles. Live leopard tortoises are intermittently seized in Namibia, although it appears that possession in these cases is not linked to international trafficking, but rather local use (including consumption). The skins of African pythons are seized regularly, which is a cause of great

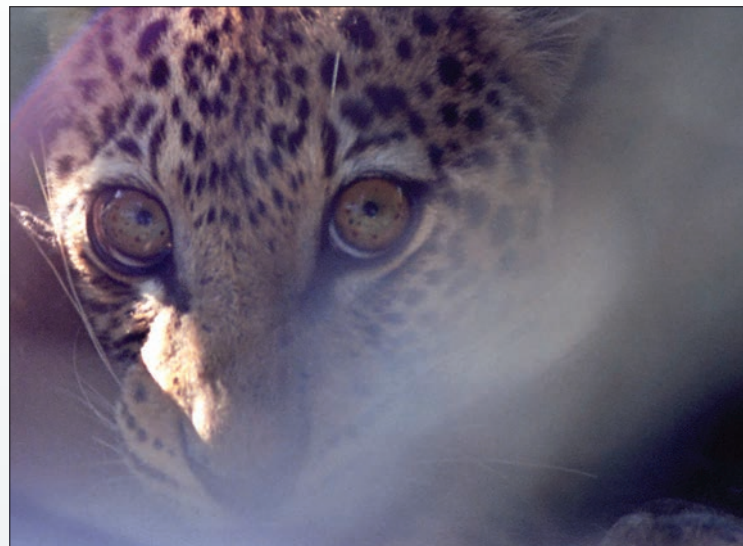
concern for the future of these reptiles. Rumours of illicit exports of live lizards from Namibia have at this stage not been confirmed through any evidence that can be used to press charges.

TIMBER

As part of its expanded mandate of combating the illegal exploitation of forestry resources, the MEFT–IIU launched a number of investigations and interventions during 2021. Although volumes of harvested timber are comparatively small in Namibia, the forestry sector is complex. In accordance with a permit and quota system, indigenous forestry resources may be legally harvested for furniture and construction timber, firewood, as well as for cosmetic and medicinal uses. Abuse of the system led to a moratorium in 2018 on cutting new timber, which remains in place. IIU investigations included surveys of priority areas and field investigations to ascertain legal compliance. A variety of transgressions were identified and are being probed.

4.4 INTERPOL Operation Thunder 2021

A global law enforcement operation codenamed Thunder 2021 was coordinated by INTERPOL and the World Customs Organisation during the month of October to counter wildlife crime around the world⁴. The operation led to the seizure worldwide of 856 kilogrammes of pangolin scales and 478 kilogrammes of ivory pieces, and the apprehension of some 300 offenders. Namibia was one of the 118 participating countries and places emphasis on collaborating with international partners to disrupt global crime networks.



The illegal keeping and captive breeding of large cats is an issue receiving focussed attention.



Illicit timber is being intercepted through targeted site investigations and inspections at various checkpoints.

The high-profile case of ‘Mox’ Namwandi

The well-known Namibian businessman, Tangi Sheefeni Namwandi, widely known as ‘Mox’, and an accomplice, Jairus Shaalukeni, were arrested in Windhoek in June 2016 on charges of being in the illegal possession of four rhino horns. The horns were confiscated at the time of arrest as part of a covert operation, and the car used to transport the illicit goods was seized.

The case was finalised in the Windhoek Regional Court on 30 April 2021, with the late Magistrate Alexis Diergaardt, who died of COVID-19 in June 2021, delivering the sentence. Namwandi was sentenced to a fine of N\$ 20,000 or 4 years imprisonment, as well as 2 years imprisonment, suspended for 5 years on condition that he is not convicted of the possession

of controlled wildlife products during this period. The vehicle used in the commission of the offence, a Mercedes-Benz C63 AMG, was forfeited to the state. This served as a significant additional penalty – the car was bought for about N\$ 600,000 in 2013 and Namwandi still owes the bank that financed the purchase a substantial amount on the loan.

In her judgement Magistrate Diergaardt noted that when the crime was committed in 2016, maximum penalties for the illegal possession of rhino horn still amounted to N\$ 20,000. As the legislation was only revised in 2017, the new maximum penalties could not be applied in this case⁵.



5. CHALLENGES FACED IN 2021

... and how they are being addressed

5.1 Investigations and arrests

A GREAT RANGE OF TRANSGRESSIONS

Violations of Namibia's wildlife protection laws can't all be lumped together as equally serious wildlife crimes, but consist of a great range of transgressions. Some of these, such as organised rhino or pangolin poaching, are directly threatening susceptible species and are carried out for personal financial gain. Other offences are reactions to human-wildlife conflict or inadvertent actions. The fact that all offences must be investigated by law-enforcement personnel often puts a considerable strain on human, financial and material resources.

The burgeoning bushmeat trade regularly requires rapid law-enforcement responses in all regions of the country. The shift of the Department of Forestry from the agricultural to the environmental ministry enables a more holistic approach to the management of terrestrial environmental resources, yet has shifted responsibility over a large sector requiring protection against criminal abuse. A variety of forest crimes have been investigated during 2021, and indications of additional criminal activity, such as the illicit trade in live plants, need further investigation. Similarly, there are indications that a growing trade in live reptiles may have an increasing impact on Namibia's herpetological fauna. Python skins are already trafficked at an alarming rate, shown by concerning levels of confiscations. Responding to all of these transgressions in addition to prevalent high-value species crimes stretches the capacities of law enforcement.

... being addressed

The MEFT-IU prioritises investigations into forest crimes and provides ongoing support to the Department of Forestry to counter these. The BRTT provides direct law-enforcement support when needed. Data on all environmental crimes is being added to the ID-WCN as these are being registered. This enables the analysis of trends and proactive interventions.

COURT-CASE PREPARATION

Inadequate court-case preparation can result in the prosecution of arrested suspects being unsuccessful. A lack of clearly incriminating evidence, poor presentation of the case, incorrect charges, limited motivation of the seriousness of wildlife crimes and numerous other factors can lead to reduced conviction rates or inappropriate sentences.

... being addressed

During 2021, the BRTT developed new systems and approaches to improve the presentation of evidence by investigating officers and prosecutors. The BRTT and PG-ECU are working closely with regional investigators and prosecutors to improve case preparation at local and regional-court levels. The PG-ECU has also scheduled training courses for investigators and prosecutors for the first quarter of 2022.

REPEAT OFFENDERS AND BAIL

It is becoming clear that hardened criminals are driving organised wildlife crime in Namibia, particularly related to rhino poaching and trafficking. An increasing number of repeat offenders, who are out on bail for previous transgressions, are being re-arrested in connection with new rhino cases.

... being addressed

The ID-WCN is being used to compile clear data on repeat offenders, with the aim of motivating additional legal means to counter repeat offenses. This includes measures to oppose bail for high-value species crimes and the option of serving additional organised-crime charges under POCA on repeat offenders. POCA charges provide increased legal options to prosecute organised wildlife crimes and significantly elevate potential penalties.

5.2 Prosecution and sentencing

AN INCREASING BACKLOG OF COURT CASES

The massive increase in registered wildlife crime cases and arrests over the past five years has put an enormous strain on the Namibian judiciary, which is already burdened with a high case load from other criminal sectors.

The time between arrests and case finalisation in wildlife crime cases has been identified as a major challenge. Numerous factors besides the high case load contribute to drawn-out court cases. This is not a challenge unique to Namibia, but is being experienced by other judiciaries in various parts of the world⁶.

... being addressed

During 2021, the PG-ECU embarked on an extensive docket clean-up campaign, visiting all regional centres in the northern half of the country. Advocates worked with regional law enforcement and prosecution personnel to

finalise case dockets and expedite legal proceedings. The high backlog of cases will be further addressed through temporary dedicated wildlife crime courts, which will hear only wildlife crime cases for an entire month. The first of these are scheduled to run simultaneously in Rundu and Katima Mulilo for the month of April 2022.

INCONSISTENT SENTENCING

An evaluation of data regarding penalties for wildlife crimes served by the courts in recent years has identified inconsistent and at times inappropriate sentences as a matter of concern. Sentences should act as a deterrent both to convicted perpetrators and potential criminals. If the profits of wildlife crime outweigh the risks, crime will continue to escalate. Recognising this threat, the government increased maximum penalties for a number of wildlife crime offences in 2017. In light of the continued escalation of wildlife crime, particularly organised high-value species crimes and meat poaching, it is vital that these revisions are applied by the courts.

... being addressed

The PG-ECU has lodged appeals against sentences which were considered inappropriate in a number of cases during 2021. In addition, the PG-ECU is collaborating with the BRTT and Rooikat Trust to develop a series of information materials that provide accessible references for law enforcement and the judiciary. This will increase awareness of the impacts of organised wildlife crime, applicable charges and appropriate sentences.

5.3 Atypical challenges

COVID-19 AND WILDLIFE CRIME

The pandemic continues to create significant health and economic challenges for Namibia, with knock-on effects for most sectors and individual lives. These have had an impact on conservation systems and wildlife protection initiatives, particularly through the loss of tourism revenue. The capacity of government, community conservancies and private reserves to protect wildlife is being adversely affected.

... being addressed

In collaboration with NGOs and international funding partners, the Namibian government has implemented a number of relief initiatives, particularly to support rural communities with their wildlife management capacities. Initiatives to support and accelerate the recovery of the tourism industry have also received priority attention.



Increasing numbers of python skins are being seized.



The issue of suspects out on bail being re-arrested for new offenses is of great concern.



The increase in wildlife crime cases and arrests over the past 5 years has caused a backlog of court cases.



6. UNDERSTANDING AND USING WILDLIFE CRIME DATA

For many decades, the Namibian environmental sector has fostered a culture of monitoring, data gathering and data interpretation, which ultimately enables informed and adaptive management. In keeping with these aims, wildlife crime data has been gathered by various agencies for many years, although in the past the information was not consistently aggregated as one national dataset.

The unprecedented surge in targeted, well-organised wildlife crime over the past decade motivated a variety of urgent countermeasures. This included initiatives to ensure comprehensive, coordinated data gathering and analysis. The idea of one national Integrated Database of Wildlife Crime in Namibia was first conceived in 2018. Its focussed development began in 2019 and first outputs were achieved during that year. By the beginning of 2020 consistent outputs were being generated.

A focussed effort was made to aggregate and enter disparate historical datasets, reaching as far back as 2009, into the integrated database. While it is recognised that there are some data gaps in some of the early data, particularly regarding cases of meat poaching, the gaps are considered inconsequential.

Data is now collected from all regions of Namibia via the regional police stations, regional prosecutor offices and regional MEFT offices. In some instances, it may take time to collect and enter all regional data. This may lead to minor data discrepancies between weekly, monthly and annual reports. The data of annual reports always supersedes that of other periodical reports.

All the separately collected data from the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (wildlife data), the Namibian Police Force (law enforcement data) and the Office of the Prosecutor General (prosecution data) is aggregated and entered into the integrated database. All data is carefully verified to avoid duplication. A wide range of comprehensive, streamlined data is now available for various applications. The primary aim of the database is to enable detailed analysis of various aspects of wildlife-crime dynamics in Namibia.

The database provides superb analytical capabilities, such as identifying links between known suspects/perpetrators, firearms, crime scenes and wildlife carcasses; identifying the most-targeted species and areas of crime prevalence; and evaluating the nationalities of perpetrators. Trends over time can be analysed in any category, and data can be mapped geographically to identify hotspots and gaps. All of this

enables investigators to work strategically, based on reliable information.

The compiled data includes:

- registered wildlife crime cases
- wildlife mortalities caused by poaching
- seized wildlife products
- seized firearms
- seized vehicles
- arrests
 - nationality of suspects
 - relevant charges
 - targeted species
- areas of crime prevalence
- status and outcome of registered court cases
- legal status of suspects

The complexity of wildlife crime webs, connected via a myriad of local, national and international cohorts, requires detailed, in-depth investigations. These cannot be based on hunches or conjecture, but instead require systematic analysis of all available information. The database enables some of this analysis. It also helps investigators to focus their attention on priority areas, cases and suspects, and thus enables optimal use of limited resources.

The database can generate automated reports for different target audiences 'at the push of a button'. Internal reports are issued to law enforcement agencies and relevant stakeholders to assist in the strategic allotment of funding, personnel and other resources.

The database has also enabled the MEFT and NAMPOL to issue detailed weekly wildlife-crime reports to the media, which have formed the basis of media reporting on wildlife crime for more than 2 years. With this, government is demonstrating its commitment to transparency and accountability.

The Integrated Database of Wildlife Crime in Namibia is today the official national database for all data related to wildlife crime. Development of the database is ongoing. New features are added as new information and new technologies become available.

7. IMPORTANT NOTES ON INTERPRETING NAMIBIAN WILDLIFE CRIME DATA

Please read these notes carefully to avoid misinterpretation of information:

1. Wildlife crime statistics are compiled on a weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual basis.
2. Statistics released of any particular period are not exhaustive. Case reports from regions may be received after the closure of that reporting period. These are added retroactively, which influences overall statistics.
3. Retroactive reporting will be reflected in compounded statistics (monthly, quarterly, annual). There may thus be slight discrepancies between weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual reports.
4. Some duplication of data may occur between regional and national reporting. This is identified during final data entry and may lead to a reduction in some totals in some instances.
5. The latest reporting period will always have the most up-to-date information. Always refer to the latest report available. If a discrepancy raises questions, please enquire about it.
6. Unless specifically noted otherwise, elephant and rhino poaching data is based on estimated date of death of the animal, not date of discovery of the carcass. Statistics of carcasses generally present a number of problems:
 - carcasses may be discovered a long time after the death of the animal (sometimes years);
 - the date of death of the animal may be difficult or impossible to determine;
 - some carcasses may never be discovered.Presenting statistics of carcasses based on estimated date of death is problematic, as statistics need to be adjusted retroactively when carcasses that are estimated to be quite old are discovered. This means that figures presented in this report may differ from figures previously published by the MEFT.
7. Many wildlife crime cases involve complex investigations, often over longer periods of time, which may or may not lead to the arrest of suspects.
8. Suspects can only be charged with an offence if there is clear, prima facie evidence against them, which can be used in a court of law.
9. Suspects are regularly arrested in possession of contraband, including illegal wildlife products and illegal firearms. These are often linked to previously reported poaching incidents, or in some cases to incidents that were previously unknown, but are uncovered through the arrest. All illegal items, and any other objects of relevance, are seized and used as evidence in court cases.
10. When suspects are found in possession of any contraband, such as illegal wildlife products, firearms or ammunition, the vehicles in which they transported those items may be seized as instrumentality in the commission of the alleged offence.
11. Follow-up investigations may lead to the additional seizure of firearms used in particular poaching cases, or other illegal firearms kept by the suspects.
12. The origin of seized wildlife products can not always be determined; animals may have been poached in Namibia or in neighbouring countries. This is of particular relevance in the Kavango and Zambezi regions of Namibia.
13. Illegal wildlife products are regularly smuggled into Namibia from neighbouring countries, either for attempted sale in Namibia, or in transit to other destinations.
14. After an initial arrest, investigations in many cases continue for longer periods of time (sometimes several years) and may lead to further arrests or seizures of contraband.
15. Court cases, like investigations, may be drawn out over several years. Direct links between arrest and conviction statistics for any one year should thus not be made (unless a link is specifically noted as part of a statistic).
16. Information on active cases is often extremely sensitive and can not be released to the public, as this would jeopardise investigations. All information that can be released will be made readily available to the public on request.



8. WILDLIFE CRIME STATISTICS SUMMARY FOR 2021

8.1 Key wildlife crime indicators during 2021:

INDICATOR	Total 2021
Wildlife-crime cases registered (all categories):	371
related to meat* poaching	185
related to high-value species** poaching/trafficking	145
related to pangolin poaching/trafficking	69
related to elephant poaching/trafficking	57
related to rhino poaching/trafficking (total of both species)	22
cases of conspiracy to poach rhino (pre-emptive arrest cases)	7
Suspects arrested (all categories):	788
related to meat* poaching	440
related to high-value species** poaching/trafficking	288
related to pangolin poaching/trafficking	124
related to elephant poaching/trafficking	97
related to rhino poaching/trafficking	76
pre-emptive arrests related to rhino poaching	24
High-value wildlife products seized:	
Pangolin – total number of seizures	86
– live animals seized	21
– dead animals or skins seized	65
Elephant – complete tusks seized	103
Rhinos – complete horns seized	15
Rhinos dehorned	115
Estimated number of animals poached:	
Elephant	8
Rhinos	40
Firearms seized (in cases related to high-value species)	18
Vehicles impounded (in cases related to high-value species)	25

Key wildlife crime indicators

* Meat species are defined in this report as giraffe, buffalo, zebras, antelopes and warthog.

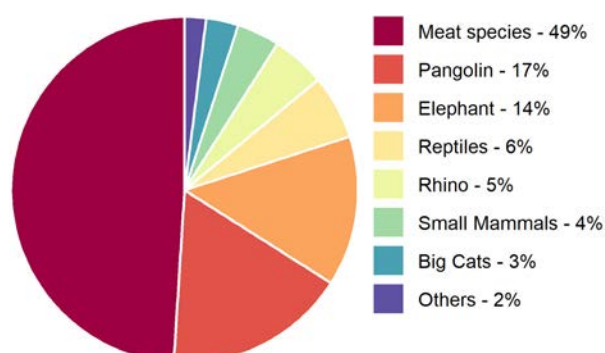
** High-value species are defined in this report as elephant, rhinoceros (black and white rhinos combined) and pangolin.

- 'Wildlife crime cases registered' include only those cases in which suspects were arrested or products were seized. Cases in which only the carcass of a poached animal was discovered are not included, although these are obviously investigated.
- Individual totals for pangolin, elephant and rhino 'cases registered' and 'suspects arrested' may add up to more than the totals in the 'cases registered' and 'suspects arrested' categories, because a number of cases and arrests may have involved more than one of the above species.
- Statistics are aggregated from all parts of the country, resulting in some cases being incorporated after the publication of a particular report. There may thus be minor differences in numbers between weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual reports.
- The number of elephant tusks seized does not relate directly to the number of elephants killed in Namibia, as tusks may originate from elephants killed in other countries.
- Cases finalised during 2021 may have been registered in previous years
- Individuals convicted during 2021 may have been arrested in previous years.

INDICATOR	Total 2021
Individual's wildlife-crime cases finalised in court (all species):	359
related to meat* poaching	242
related to high-value species** poaching/trafficking	93
Individuals convicted for wildlife crimes (all species):	287 (80% conviction rate)
related to meat* poaching	199 (82% conviction rate)
related to high-value species** poaching/trafficking	66 (71% conviction rate)
Convictions resulting in custodial sentence:	246 (19 months on average)
related to meat* poaching	160 (14.5 months on average)
related to high-value species** poaching/trafficking	64 (29.1 months on average)
Convictions resulting in monetary fine:	268 (N\$ 12,046 on average)
related to meat poaching*	189 (N\$ 5,048 on average)
related to high-value species** poaching/trafficking	60 (N\$ 31,748 on average)

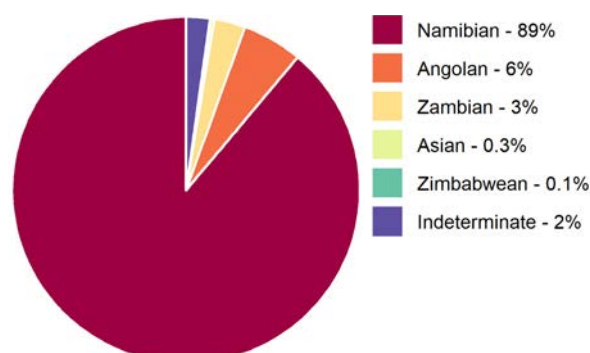
8.2 Ratios of targeted species:

for all registered cases recorded in 2021



8.3 Ratios of suspects' nationalities

for all arrests recorded in 2021



Targeted species

- *Meat species are defined in this report as giraffe, buffalo, zebras, antelopes and warthog.*
- *Meat species make up the majority of targeted species.*
- *Pangolin is by far the most-targeted high-value species; these are often trafficked alive; many live animals that are seized can be rehabilitated and released.*
- *Elephant cases make up a significant percentage; these usually consist of ivory seizures; it's rarely possible to link a seizure to a particular carcass; a significant proportion of ivory seized in Namibia originates from elephants killed in other countries.*
- *Rhino cases (both species combined) make up a relatively small percentage; some are pre-emptive cases where the animals can be saved.*
- *Ratios are calculated using the number of cases registered per category, not the number of individual animals involved.*

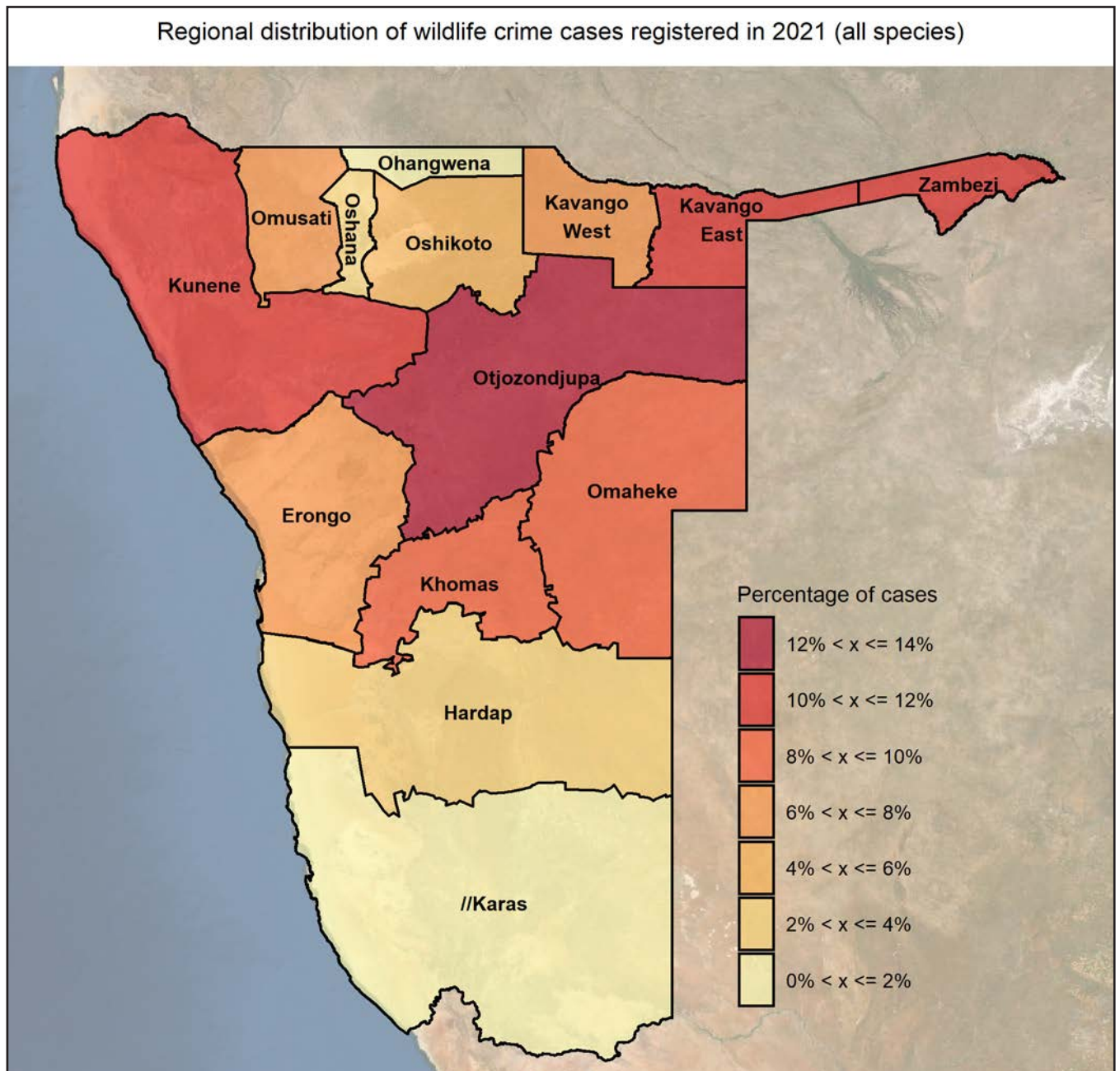
Nationality of suspects

- *Most wildlife crimes in Namibia are being carried out by Namibians.*
- *Suspects from neighbouring countries make up the majority of other nationalities.*
- *Contrary to widespread beliefs, Asians only make up a very small proportion of suspects arrested in Namibia; the composition of nationalities will obviously differ substantially as one moves up the crime chain to international kingpins.*



9. GENERAL WILDLIFE CRIME TRENDS 2015–2021

9.1 REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION of ALL REGISTERED CASES during 2021:



Regional distribution of registered cases

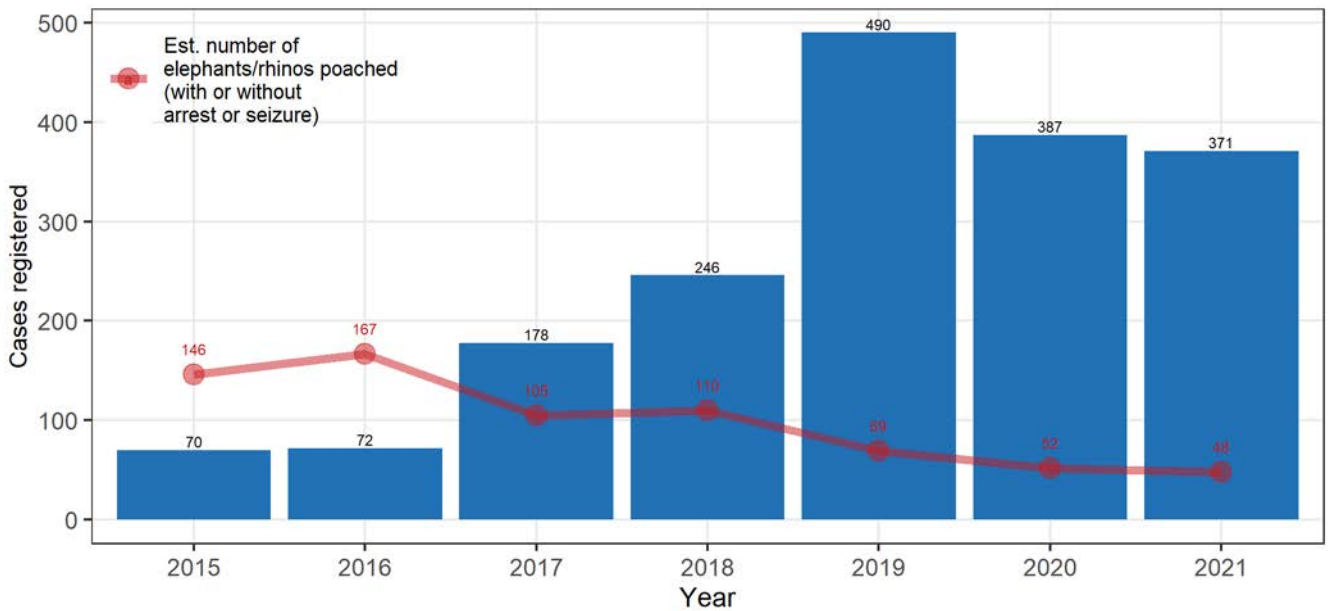
- The map shows the total number of wildlife crime cases registered during 2021 and includes all types of wildlife crime.
- The map indicates the regions in which cases were registered, not necessarily where the crime was committed. Cases are generally registered at the police station nearest to the place of arrest, which may be in another region than where an incident occurred.
- Wildlife crime is clearly prevalent in all regions of Namibia.
- During 2021, the highest number of cases was registered in the Otjozondjupa Region.
- Cases may involve poaching, possession, trafficking and other transgressions, or a combination of offences.
- Wildlife densities are generally lower in the south and central north than other parts of the country, resulting in fewer opportunities for poachers.
- Trafficking of high-value-species products is generally more prevalent in the north of the country; this is influenced by the proximity of the northern borders, which represent known trafficking routes for smuggling contraband in or out of the country.



Meat-poaching species (i.e. giraffe, zebras, buffalo, antelopes and warthog) make up close to 50% of all wildlife targeted by poachers and traffickers. Yet pangolin and elephant are the most-targeted individual species, respectively making up 17% and 14%, of all registered cases – although much of the seized ivory comes from elephants killed outside Namibia.

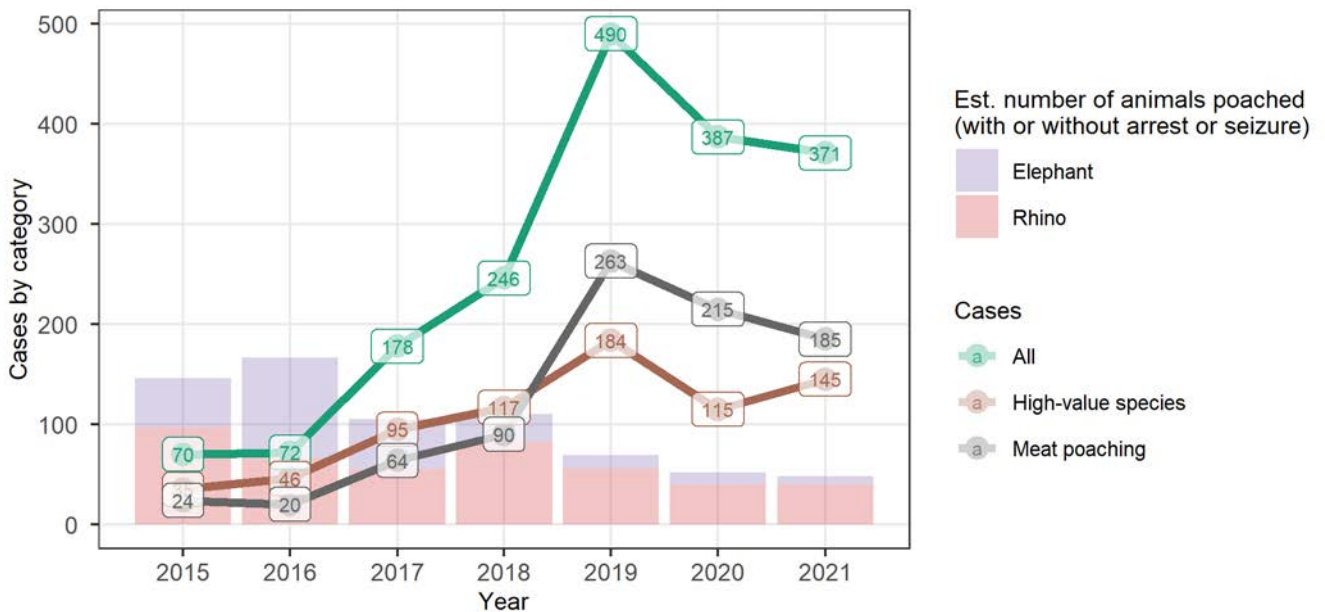
9.2 Wildlife crime CASES REGISTERED (all categories)

Annual wildlife crime cases registered (all cases) vs. annual poaching figures



9.3 Wildlife crime CASES REGISTERED divided BY SPECIES CATEGORIES

Number of cases by category per year



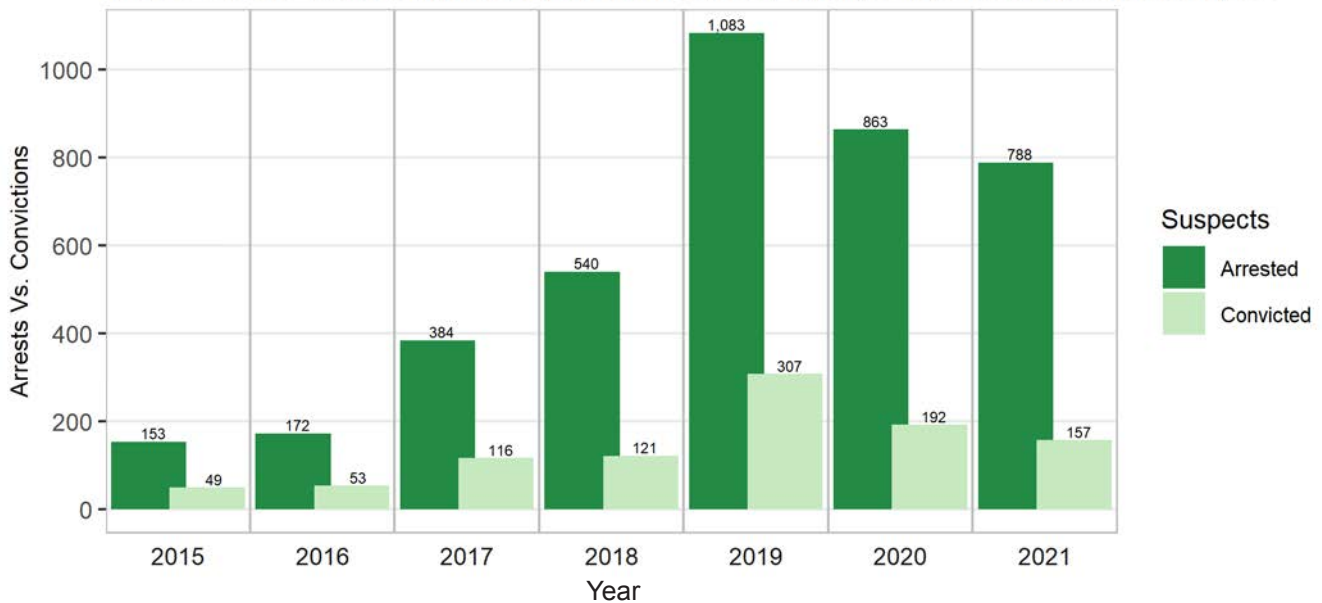
Trends in the total number of wildlife crime cases registered

- It is important to note that the registered cases in the above graphs include only those cases in which arrests or seizures were made; all discovered carcasses of rhinos and elephant are investigated, and are indicated separately on the graphs to reflect overall poaching prevalence.
- Poaching of elephant and rhinos has clearly decreased from peaks in 2015 and 2016.
- The number of wildlife crime cases registered per year has risen sharply since 2017; this is influenced by a number of factors, including external funding and technical support channelled directly to investigations (since 2017), launch of Operation Blue Rhino (2018) and increased crime.
- Meat-poaching cases made up 50% or more of all registered wildlife crime cases since 2019.
- The decrease in registered cases during 2020 and 2021 may have a variety of causes, including law enforcement success, the effects of heightened police checks and movement restrictions during the pandemic, and decreased crime.
- High-value species are defined in this report as elephant, rhinoceros (black and white rhinos combined) and pangolin.
- Meat species are defined in this report as giraffe, buffalo, zebras, antelopes and warthog.

9.4 Wildlife crime ARRESTS versus CONVICTIONS (all categories)

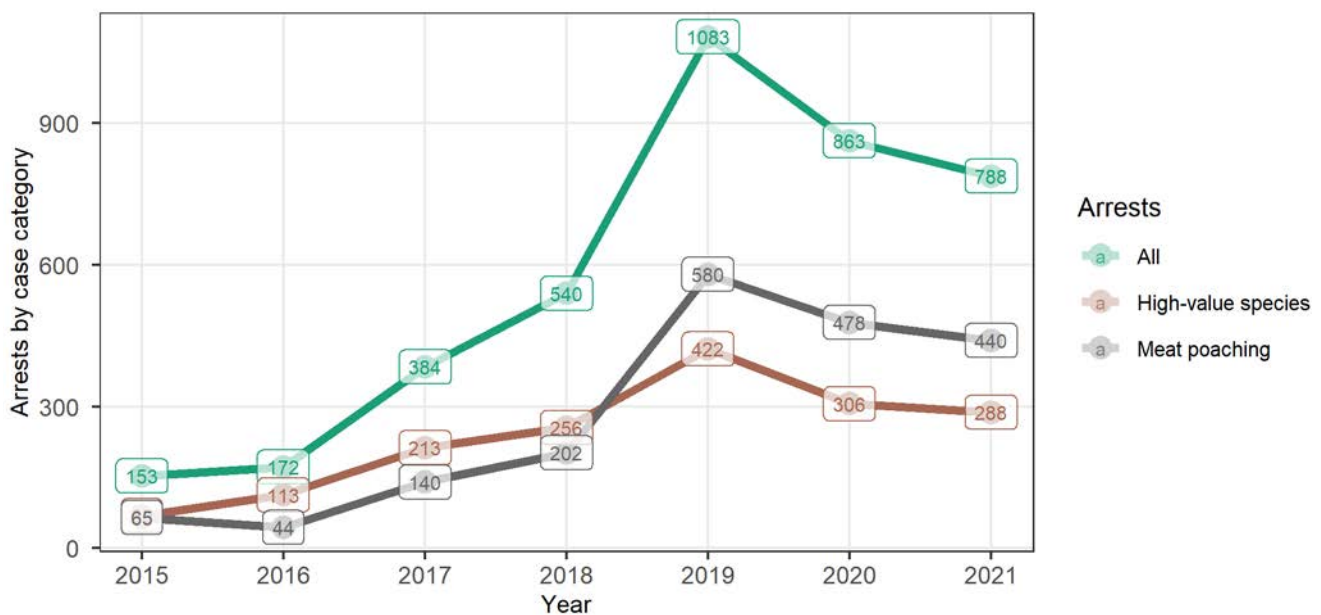
Annual arrests vs. their current conviction status (all cases)

The bars "Convicted" indicate the number of suspects who were arrested in the respective year and have been convicted by now.



9.5 Wildlife crime ARREST divided BY SPECIES CATEGORIES

Number of arrests by case category



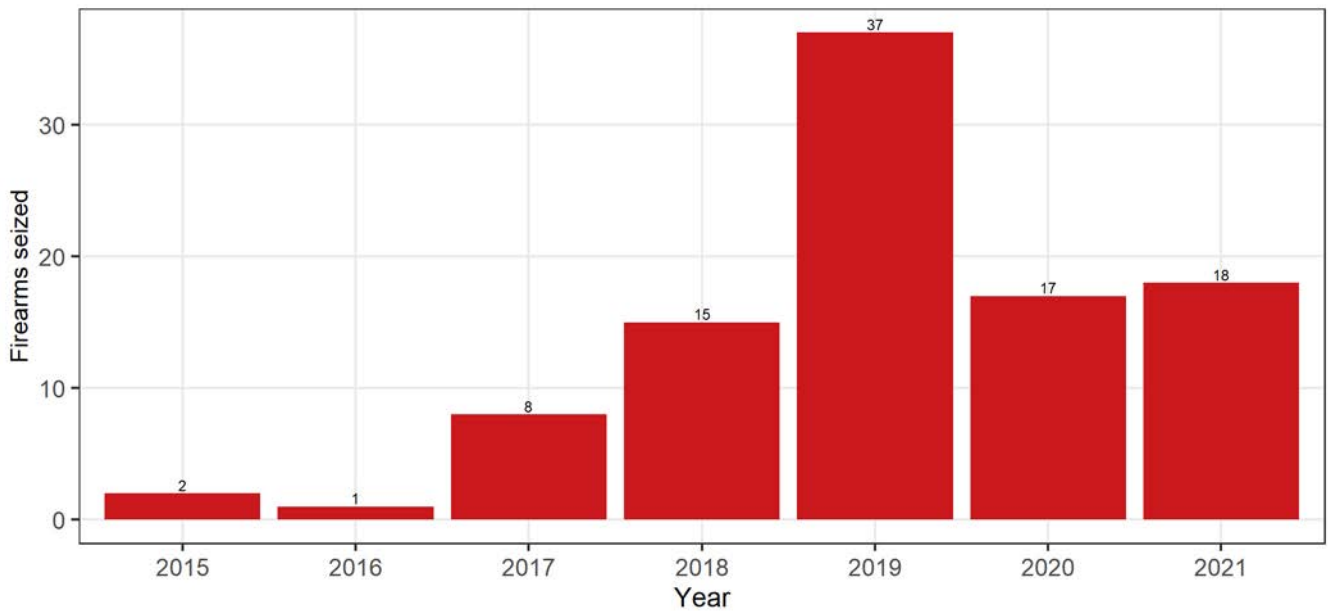
Trends in the total number of wildlife crime arrests, as well as related convictions

- Annual arrests have increased sharply since 2017; this is influenced by a number of factors, including external funding and technical support channelled directly to investigations (since 2017), launch of Operation Blue Rhino (2018) and increased crime.
- The low number of convictions (as at end December 2021) for arrests made in any year is caused by the lengthy process of finalising cases, rather than low conviction rates (see p. 26 for the annual conviction rate of finalised cases; p. 27 for details on the challenges of finalising cases)
- The decrease in arrests during 2020 and 2021 may have a variety of causes, including law enforcement success, the effects of heightened police checks and movement restrictions during the pandemic, and decreased crime.
- High-value species are defined in this report as elephant, rhinoceros (black and white rhinos combined) and pangolin.
- Meat species are defined in this report as giraffe, buffalo, zebras, antelopes and warthog.



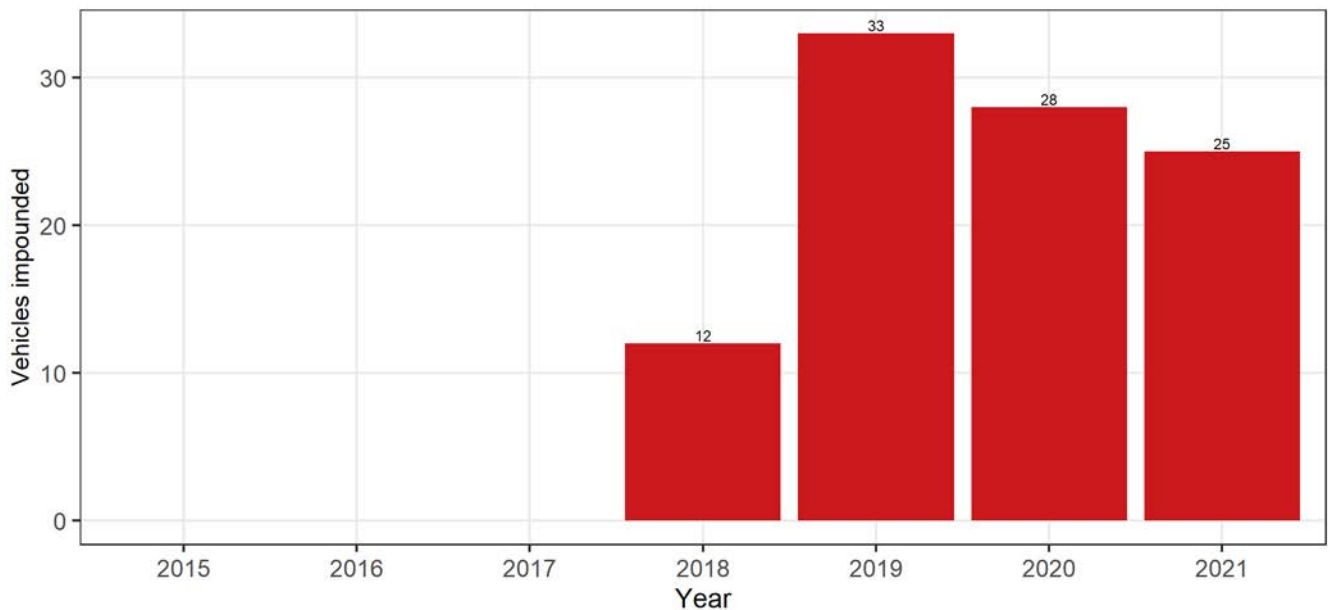
9.6 Wildlife crime FIREARM SEIZURES (all categories)

Annual number of firearms seized in line with wildlife crime cases



9.7 Wildlife crime VEHICLE SEIZURES (all categories)

Annual number of vehicles impounded in line with wildlife crime cases

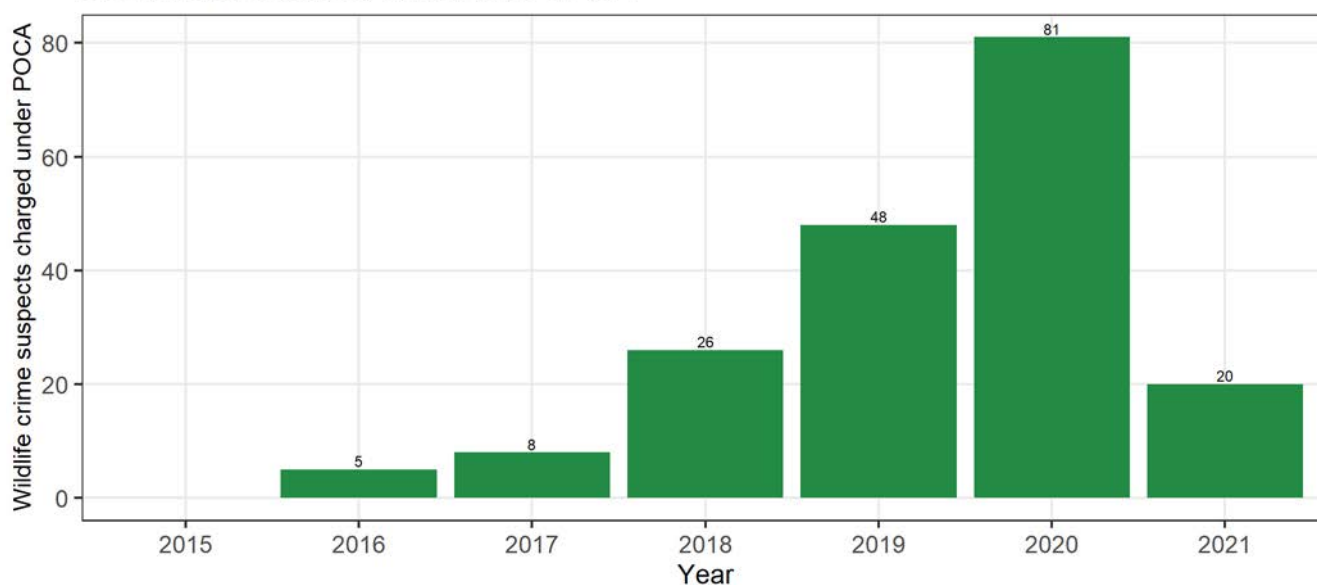


Seizures of firearms and vehicles

- When suspects are found in possession of contraband such as illegal wildlife products, firearms or ammunition, the vehicles in which they transported those items may be seized as **instrumentality** in the commission of an alleged offence.
- If suspects are convicted as charged, vehicles or other property that has been impounded in relation to the charges may be forfeited to the state.
- The forfeiture of expensive vehicles represents a significant additional punishment for criminals.
- Suspects are regularly arrested in possession of illegal firearms and other contraband; these are often linked to previously reported poaching incidents, or in some cases to incidents that were previously unknown, but are uncovered through the arrest.
- Follow-up investigations may lead to the additional seizure of firearms used in particular poaching cases, or other illegal firearms kept by the suspects.
- Decreases in the number of firearm and vehicle seizures during 2020 and 2021 are linked to decreases in cases and arrests.

9.8 PREVENTION OF ORGANISED CRIME ACT CHARGES (all categories)

Annual number of wildlife crime suspects charged under the Prevention of Organized Crime Act 29 of 2004



The importance of POCA charges for wildlife crimes

Wildlife crime is a highly organised criminal sector driven by international illicit markets and global crime webs. Over the past decade, high-value species crimes in Namibia have rapidly escalated to the level of transnational organised crime. This has led to a steep increase in the number of suspects charged under the Prevention of Organised Crime Act (POCA).

The systematic transgressions involved in organised crime are much more serious than the once-off infringements of spontaneous crimes. Organised crime thus requires more stringent countermeasures than the conservation ordinance and related laws enable. The Prevention of Organised Crime Act provides legislation to prosecute organised-crime offences and punish perpetrators according to the seriousness of their transgressions.

Organised crime is often extremely complex and may have far-reaching impacts, which are much more diverse than the loss of vulnerable wildlife. Wildlife crime can be categorised as organised crime under POCA when it is carried out by two or more people repeatedly working together, and when it includes any of the following organised-crime categories:

- racketeering
- criminal gang activity
- money laundering

POCA also provides for the restraint, confiscation or forfeiture of property gained through criminal activity and creates a legal framework for criminal asset recovery. It furthermore

enables much higher, more appropriate penalties than other legislation that is aimed at countering irregular, once-off infringements.

Prior to the spike in high-value-species crimes experienced over the past decade, investigations, charges, prosecution and sentencing of wildlife crimes in Namibia focussed almost exclusively on the predicate offences of poaching, possession and trafficking of wildlife or wildlife products. As only isolated incidents of high-value-species crimes were recorded, there was little cause to investigate more serious offences that may be placed under the rubric of organised crime.

Even today, the applicability of organised-crime charges should be considered with care. Most charges under POCA must be authorised by the Office of the Prosecutor General. These crimes often require complex additional investigations to secure relevant incriminating evidence. Such investigations may need to be carried out by specifically mandated government agencies and may require special authorisation.

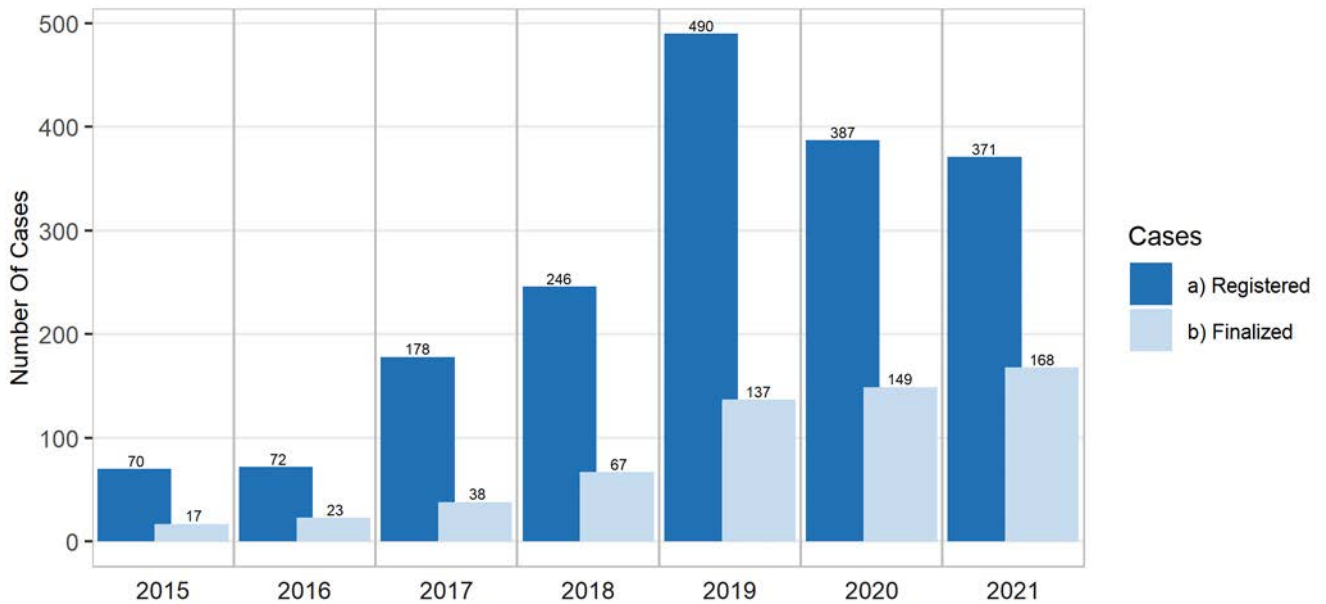
To enable successful prosecution of organised-crime charges, it is vital that the correct charges are applied, and that the necessary evidence is secured through collaboration between NAMPOL, the PG-ECU and other government agencies such as the Financial Intelligence Centre. This will enable prosecutors to present strong cases for conviction.



9.9 ANNUAL CASES REGISTERED versus ANNUAL CASES FINALISED (all categories)

Cases are shown by year of registration and finalisation, respectively; finalised cases may have been registered in previous years.

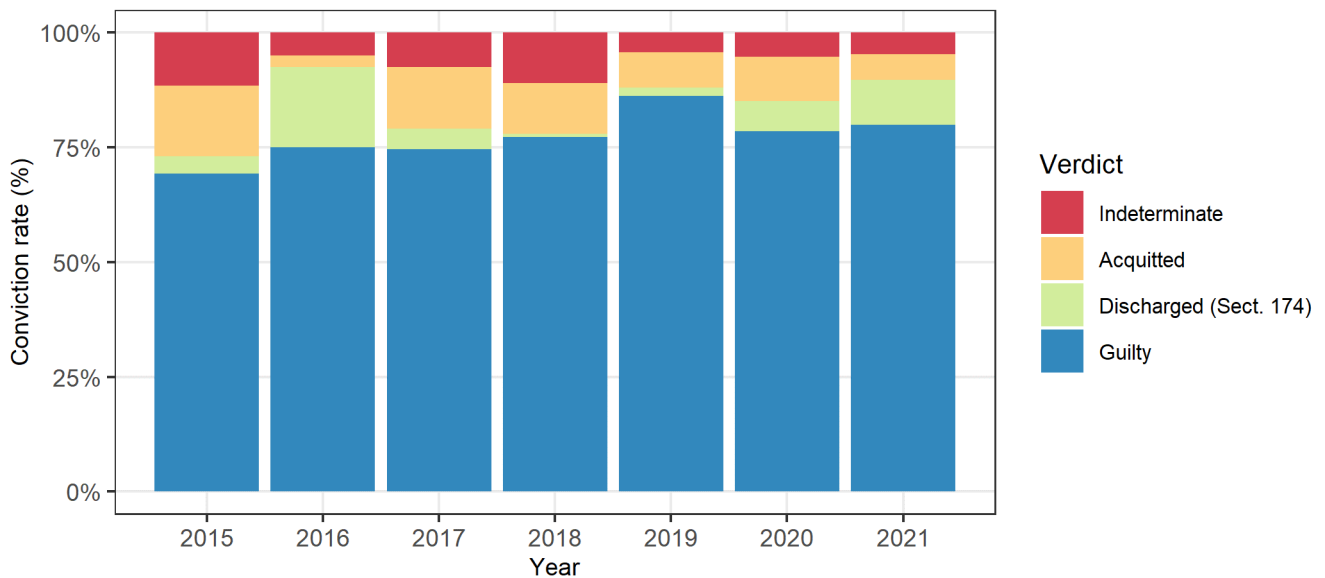
Annually registered vs. finalized wildlife crime cases (all cases)



9.10 ANNUAL CONVICTION RATE (all categories)

Annual conviction rate over time (all cases)

(Bar position indicates the year of verdict)



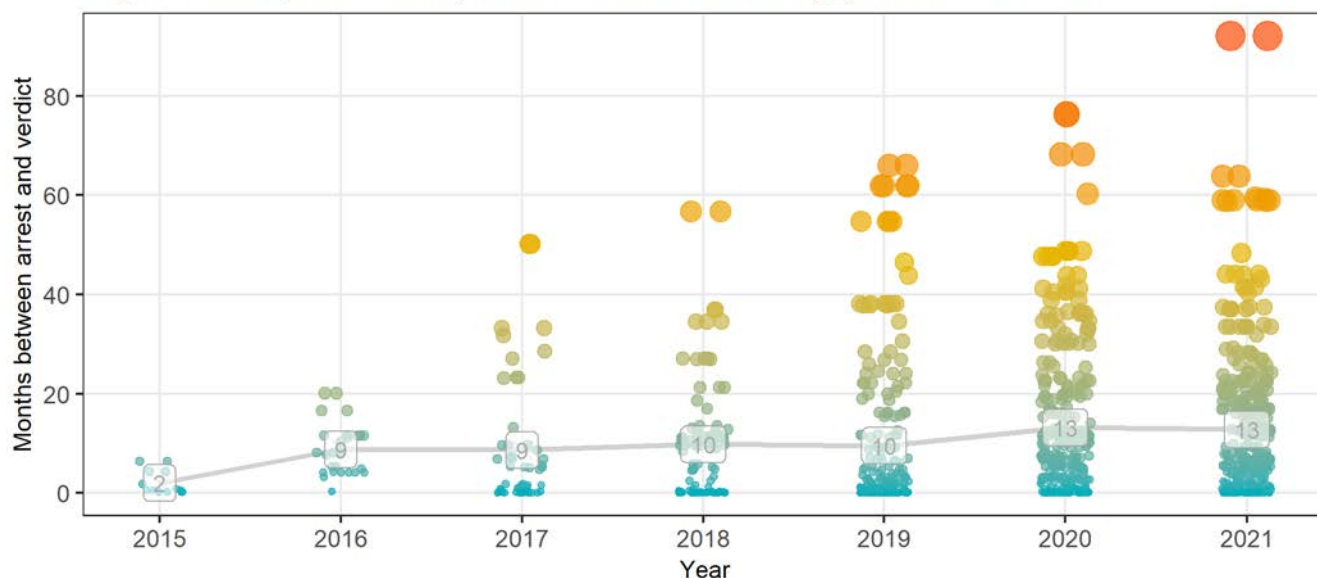
Annually registered versus finalised cases, annual conviction rate, and time between arrest and case finalisation

- **Registered vs. finalised cases** indicates how many cases are registered in a particular year, and how many cases are finalised in a particular year; as cases may take several years to finalise, links between registered and finalised cases are not made in this graph; while the rate of case finalisation appears to be improving, many more cases are registered than finalised in any particular year, leading to an increasing build-up of ongoing cases and a growing strain on the judiciary.
- **Annual conviction rate** refers to the percentage of suspects in finalised cases who have been convicted; the annual conviction rate is near or above 75% for all years since 2016, indicating that appropriate charges were filed and that the cases were well-presented in court; indeterminate indicates that the status has not yet been defined in the database.
- **Time between arrest and case finalisation** may vary considerably, with some cases finalised in a matter of weeks, while others have taken more than 7 years to complete; the reasons for case duration and the causes of case delays are complex (see opposite text for more details).

9.11 TIME BETWEEN ARREST and CASE FINALISATION (all categories)

Distribution of months passed between individuals' arrest and case finalization (all cases)

The position of a data point indicates the year in which a case was finalized. The grey line indicates the annual mean.



The unique challenge of finalising wildlife crime cases

Organised wildlife crime at its current levels is relatively new in Namibia and is only one component of criminal activity in the country. This also includes homicide, rape and domestic violence, fraud, burglary, stock theft and other serious crimes. The capacity of the courts to handle all cases is often stretched. The increasing backlog represents a massive challenge.

On average, Namibian wildlife crime cases take around three-quarters of a year to be finalised, though this has increased in recent years. While some cases are finalised in less than a month, others may take years to be completed. A small number of extremely drawn out, complex cases can influence overall averages. Restrictions on public movement and interaction during the pandemic have led to additional challenges, increasing the average time taken to finalise cases.

Rhino poaching and trafficking cases tend to be the longest, because they involve intricate criminal networks and interconnected activities. Investigations may be extremely complex, leading to the arrest of numerous subjects and the collection of diverse evidence. Meat-poaching cases tend to be relatively straight forward (involving limited trafficking chains and few intermediaries), yet the most draw-out cases finalised in recent years were meat-poaching cases concluded in 2021, lasting more than 7 years. In isolated instances, failures in the justice system may lead to undesirably lengthy cases. When assessing the length of cases, the entire legal process should be considered. This includes various potential steps:

- prosecution-driven investigation & formulation of charges
- arrest or serving of summons
- plead hearing
- assigning of legal representation
- bail hearing
- submission of case docket for PG decision
- trial and sentencing

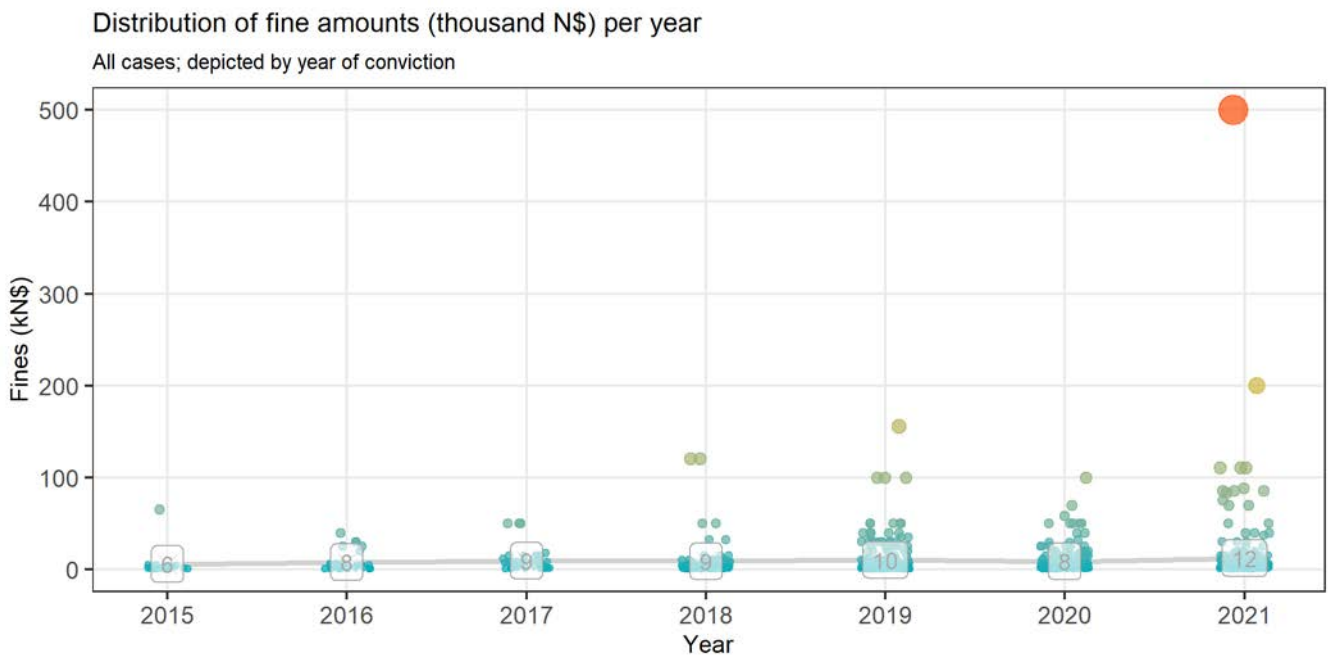
The increasing number of wildlife crime cases registered in recent years has led to a massive additional burden on Namibia's judiciary. Many factors can cause delays, including:

- changes of magistrate, prosecution or defence
- securing legal representation for suspects
- securing court interpreters for suspects or witnesses (all suspects & witnesses have the right to an interpreter)
- court schedules set months in advance may be extremely tight; delays can have significant knock-on effects
- all sensitive cases (e.g. rhino cases), must be submitted to the PG's Office for guidance; many are transferred from local to regional courts
- concluding investigations, including the arrest of further suspects or the procurement of forensics results
- the legal unavailability of witnesses

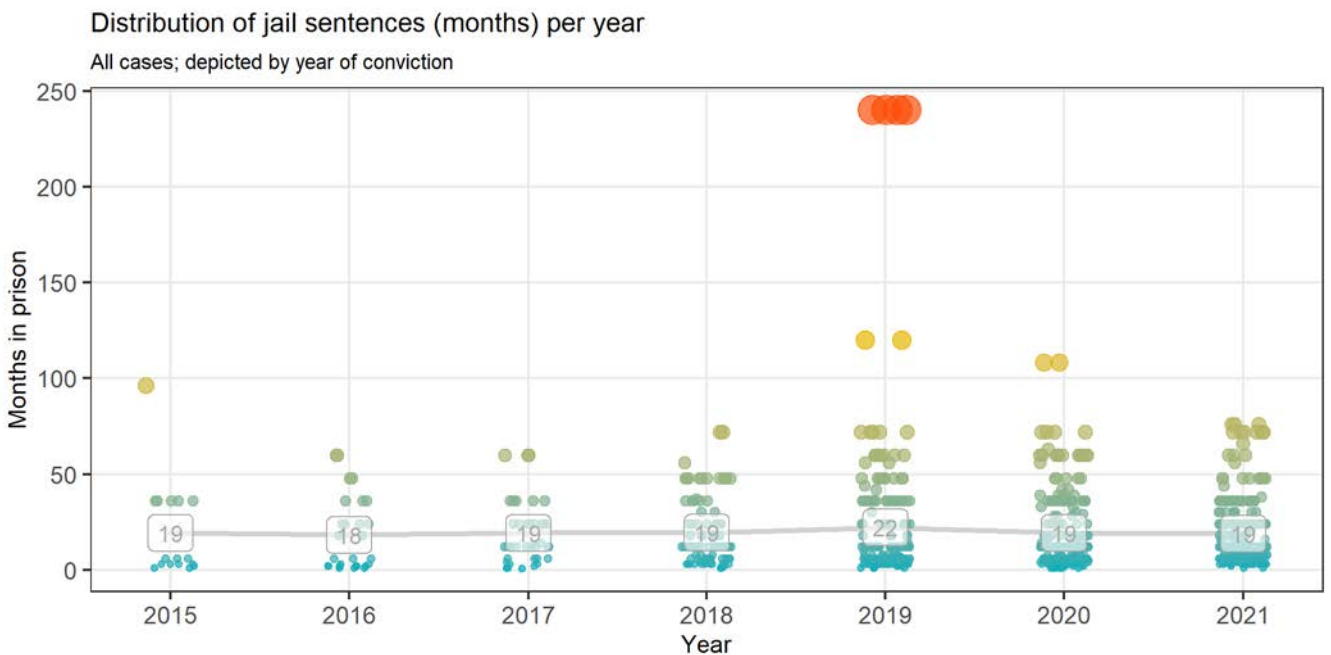
These challenges are not unique to Namibia, but are faced by judiciaries worldwide⁶. Improvements are always possible and the Namibian judiciary continues to strive towards an ideal delivery of justice.



9.12 Wildlife crime FINES (all categories)



9.13 Wildlife crime PRISON SENTENCES (all categories)



Wildlife crime fines and prison sentences

- The graphs of fines and jail terms show the changes in the height of sentences over time; the time line (x-axis) indicates the date of sentencing; the colour and size of the dots varies according to the height of the sentence; small blue represent the lowest and large orange the highest; the grey line indicates the annual average; the graphs include all registered wildlife crime cases and all related charges against perpetrators.
- The fine of N\$ 500,000 handed down in 2021 was in a rhino trafficking case registered in 2019; the vehicle used in the commission of the crime, a BMW 320i, was also forfeited to the state, issuing a stern additional penalty.
- The sentences of 20 years imprisonment handed down in 2019 were served on four Chinese co-conspirators who attempted to smuggle 14 rhino horns out of the country in 2014; the lengthy court case included an unsuccessful appeal against the original sentence of 14 years imprisonment passed in 2016, and the reinstatement of money-laundering charges that increased the final sentence.
- The average height of sentences has only increased marginally for fines and has remained constant for prison terms, with the exception of a few outliers.

The unique challenge of appropriate penalties for wildlife crimes

The conservation-conscious public often has very strong opinions on penalties for poaching rhinos, elephants or other wildlife. While public support for conservation is vital, the realities of what motivates wildlife crimes, what laws are being broken, what impacts this has – and what might be appropriate penalties for the transgressions – are extremely complex issues (see p. 31 for more details).

Namibia's Nature Conservation Ordinance 4 of 1975 (updated by Nature Conservation Amendment Act, 1996) has guided Namibia's wildlife management and the handling of wildlife crime for many decades. Over the years, the ordinance has seen numerous revisions to remain relevant to changing circumstances (latest 2017). Yet the ongoing escalation of international wildlife crime over recent decades required the introduction of further legislation to counter this. A number of acts are applicable to wildlife crimes and some were specifically introduced in recent decades to counter modern, organised crime. The most relevant legislation includes:

- Controlled Wildlife Products & Trade Act (2008/2017)
- Prevention of Organised Crime Act (2004/2008)
- Arms & Ammunitions Act (1996)
- Immigration Control Act (1993)
- Public & Environmental Health Act (2015)

Wildlife crimes can be extremely complex and may include the illegal killing of an animal, the trafficking of its parts, the use of illegal firearms, illegal immigration into Namibia, criminal gang activity, racketeering and money laundering, among other offences. A range of charges may be prosecuted as part of one crime, creating complex court cases that require highly detailed evidence and may take a long time to complete.

While a similar offence may have been committed in two separate cases, one may involve planned, repeated criminal intent, while the other may have been carried out in defence of property. For example, a lion might be killed to make money from the illicit sale of its parts, while another lion might be killed in response to a human–wildlife conflict incident. The cases should obviously be treated differently and appropriate penalties decided by the court are likely to differ considerably.

Other cases might be straight forward and much less serious. Some may even be inadvertent, where a person with no criminal intent breaks a law through ignorance. Typical cases may include collecting controlled wildlife products as personal souvenirs, or keeping wild animals as pets without the required permits.

Transnational organised wildlife crime is the most serious category and is usually carried out by hardened career criminals trying to enrich themselves. Legislation such as the Prevention of Organised Crime Act recognises this and provides for the highest penalties. Depending on

the transgression, maximum penalties may be as high as N\$ 1 billion or imprisonment for 100 years.

Namibian legislation stipulates maximum penalties for each specified transgression. The sentences handed down by the courts serve three fundamental purposes:

- punishing the perpetrator
- deterring and reducing crime
- protecting society

Much higher maximum penalties for wildlife crimes (and related organised crime) were introduced as part of the new and revised laws indicated above. Importantly, legislation only stipulates maximum penalties, but actual sentences remain at the discretion of the presiding court. In order to ensure justice, courts must deliberate on the appropriate penalty for a particular crime and the person that has committed it. While many factors can play a role in final verdicts, defendants are judged on three main criteria:

- seriousness of the crime
- circumstances of the accused
- interest of society

The seriousness of a crime is generally indicated by the relevant legislation and potential maximum penalties, although there is much room for individual interpretation of a case. Wildlife crime is not always perceived to be as serious as it actually is, because many of its impacts are poorly understood. The circumstances of an accused may vary significantly and can range from an impoverished individual driven by hunger to kill an animal, to a hardened international criminal enriching himself without any regard for the impacts of his actions. The interest of society is multi-faceted and may include the need to protect society from dangerous criminals, and the need to protect Namibia's natural resources.

Data in this report portrays the differences between current maximum and actual penalties for very specific transgressions, as decided by the courts. While there is a need to ensure more appropriate penalties in some cases, the data does not depict the highly nuanced nature of individual cases, nor the circumstances of perpetrators. It also does not include separate charges or penalties under additional legislation.

The seriousness and wide-ranging impacts of highly organised wildlife crime must obviously be considered by the judiciary. Importantly, penalties for wildlife crimes must retain a healthy correlation to penalties for other crimes such as murder, rape or child abuse. Maximum penalties should target hardened transnational criminals who drive wildlife crime, not impoverished local community members. Public outrage reactions that demand the death penalty for perpetrators of wildlife crimes are inappropriate and ignore the proper course of justice.





Meat poaching in Namibia falls into two main categories:
1) organised poaching to secure meat for sale
2) subsistence poaching to secure food to eat.
The two are very different and require a nuanced approach.

10. SPECIAL FOCUS: THE COMPLEX WORKINGS AND IMPACTS OF WILDLIFE CRIME

Wildlife crime has many facets. A variety of factors motivate criminal activity, which may involve very different levels of seriousness. Organised wildlife crime has extremely serious impacts and entails the establishment of international criminal networks that are based on convoluted linkages and drivers. High prices for illicit products at end markets fuel the demand along the crime chain and in source countries. Yet in its natural habitat, wildlife is a vital component of ecosystem health – and the basis for legitimate economic sectors and livelihoods. These are being undermined – and in many cases destroyed – by organised wildlife crime.

A RANGE OF WILDLIFE-CRIME TRANSGRESSIONS

It is important to highlight that transgressions against Namibian wildlife laws occur at a variety of levels and are carried out by people with different backgrounds for a range of reasons. The transgressions may involve well-organised, transnational criminal activity, or they may be carried out inadvertently by people who are not aware of the nuanced details of Namibia's wildlife laws. It is important that the public, as well as law-enforcement and prosecution officials all understand the various types of transgressions and their impacts.

Wildlife crime in Namibia can be broadly divided into the following categories, which have different levels of organisation and are carried out with different motives. There may be some overlap between some of these divisions:

- **Organised poaching and trafficking targeting any species that has a high value for sale at international markets (high-value species crimes);** this sector is well-organised and includes local poaching gangs, national crime syndicates and complex international trafficking chains [unless otherwise specified, high-value species comprise elephant, rhinos and pangolin in this report].
- **Organised poaching targeting meat species for sale at local markets;** this sector is organised, although the poachers mostly sell directly to end markets or even consumers, requiring a very limited trafficking chain [unless otherwise specified, meat species comprise giraffe, buffalo, zebras, antelopes and warthog in this report].
- **Subsistence poaching targeting meat species for own consumption;** poaching is spontaneous, driven by immediate needs; the meat is directly consumed; there is no trafficking chain.
- **Retaliatory or preventative killing targeting conflict species;** predators or herbivores are killed by farmers to avenge or pre-empt loss of livestock, crops or other damage; there is no trafficking – the carcasses are often hidden, buried or burnt to avoid detection.
- **Keeping live wild animals for financial gain;** large cats and other species are kept as tourist attractions; this may lead to breeding in captivity and subsequent trafficking to supply illegal canned hunting or other illicit trade.
- **Negligent transgressions against permit systems;** these are usually committed by people with legal access to wildlife who fail to adhere to the required permit systems out of ignorance, laziness or to save money.
- **Inadvertent transgressions;** these include keeping cultural items or family keepsakes such as old skins or skulls of protected species without the necessary permits, or collecting illegal wildlife products as decorative mementos, or keeping species such as tortoises or monkeys as pets.
- **Other environmental crimes;** a variety of other environmental crimes are prevalent in Namibia, including forest crimes and mining transgressions; these are not the subject of this report, which focuses mainly on crimes targeting wild animals.



A NUANCED APPROACH TO COUNTERING WILDLIFE CRIME

A hardened repeat offender who is part of a criminal gang that uses illegal guns to kill rhinos for their horns and traffic these via international crime chains is very different to someone who loves animals and keeps a protected tortoise as a pet, who is very different to a rural community member who kills a buck to provide food to his hungry family. Yet all are transgressing against the laws that protect Namibia's wildlife. Clearly, a differentiated approach is needed in the application of the law.

Namibian legislation clearly stipulates how the country's wildlife and other natural resources are protected against mistreatment and over-utilisation. The conservation ordinance and related laws specify which species may be lured, pursued, captured or killed, and under which conditions. Laws regulate access to protected areas, as well as the import, export, transportation and trade of wildlife and wildlife products. Other laws regulate the registration and use of firearms, and financial management and tax obligations. Further laws that may be applicable to wildlife crime prohibit fraud, corruption, money laundering, racketeering and criminal gang activity, as well as conspiracy to commit an offence. Laws regarding animal welfare, public health and safety, immigration and other aspects of criminal procedures may also be of relevance to some transgressions.

Namibian indigenous wildlife species are listed under one of the following categories in the nature conservation ordinance, each with clear regulations:

- Specially protected game
- Protected game
- Hunttable game

At a global level, international protocols define the global conservation status of species, facilitate the protection of global biodiversity and regulate the global wildlife trade. Most relevant to wildlife crime are the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the Red List of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

Namibian communities have legal access to wildlife under clearly defined conditions. The public should be aware that all wildlife, even if categorised as 'hunttable game', is subject to some form of legislative control. The law clearly stipulates if and how wildlife in the various categories may be used, and related permit systems regulate that use. Before disturbing, luring, pursuing, capturing or killing any live wild animal, or collecting the parts of any dead wild animal, members of the public should ensure that they have the right to do so. This will avoid the shock of criminal charges.

While the laws protecting Namibia's wild animals are clear, transgressions against them can have very different levels of seriousness, and offenders can have very different intentions when committing an infringement. The judicial system thus provides for a nuanced approach to dealing with criminal offences. Three basic principles govern how law enforcement and prosecution should handle transgressions, and how a court of law will judge a defendant:

- Seriousness of the crime
- Circumstances of the accused
- Interest of society

Interpretation of these principles is again nuanced and depends on awareness of the diverse impacts of wildlife crime, the complexity of socio-economic conditions, and public perceptions and norms. Public reactions to wrongdoings are rapidly changing in a world of social media pressure, which often includes international responses to local incidents without understanding their context.

Poached meat that ends up straight in the poacher's cooking pot is clearly motivated by hunger.



ORGANISED WILDLIFE CRIME – DRIVERS

Environmental crimes are currently considered the fourth-largest global criminal sector after drug trafficking, counterfeit crimes, and human trafficking⁷. Following international trends, the sector has exploded in Namibia over the past decade, with peaks in the poaching of rhinos and elephant experienced around 2015–16, while pangolin trafficking escalated to a peak in confiscations in 2019. These high-value-species crimes are all fuelled by international markets, particularly in Asia, yet local drivers in Namibia are complex and not always well-understood.

COMPLEX DRIVERS

The drivers of crime can be extremely complex. Rural poverty is regularly cited as one of the foremost drivers of poaching, yet nuanced studies suggest that motives may be much more complex⁸. Organised wildlife crime, in particular, is often just one facet of systematic criminal activity, which may include robbery, drug trafficking, illicit diamond dealing and other crimes. Organised crime is generally motivated by financial or other material gain, although diverse personal motivations may play important roles.

SOCIAL NORMS

What a family, community or wider society considers acceptable behaviour plays a significant role in crime prevalence. Many rural communities consider wildlife part of their traditional resources and may view wildlife crime very differently to urban-based environmentalists – or the law. This becomes more complex when human–wildlife conflict is a threat to rural livelihoods. High-value species crimes are generally motivated by the desire to make ‘fast money’, and are carried out by ruthless individuals who feel the law does not apply to them or they can ‘get away with it’. Criminals may also justify illegal activity because they feel aggrieved and have a right to ‘take what’s theirs’.

WILDLIFE LAWS

When products are in high demand but are not legally available, their illicit value may become a key driver of

crime. Matters are complicated considerably when the laws in a source country differ from the laws in an end-market country. While international protocols regulate the global wildlife trade, the local laws in an end market country may diverge from these. Such disparities can drive wildlife crime.

ILLCIT LOCAL MARKETS

While the markets for high-value species products are outside Namibia, organised meat poaching supplies local markets. Namibia is a meat-loving nation and meat poaching is driven by a seemingly insatiable demand for affordable meat. High meat prices at butchereries and supermarkets are fuelling this demand. While much of the meat poached in Namibia is sold through illicit street markets and ‘back-door sales’, there is evidence that some poached meat is being channelled into legal butchereries in urban centres.

INTERNATIONAL WILDLIFE MARKETS

One of the main drivers of wildlife crime are the consumers of illegal products, who are willing to pay high prices to access what they consider valuable commodities. End markets have their own complex dynamics, with shifting traditional and modern consumer demands. As some traditional uses of wildlife products diminish, new uses are being reported for these products. Clearly, demand is not entirely consumer driven, but is influenced by suppliers creating new demand by touting miracle cures or whimsical uses, such as rhino horn as a cancer cure or hangover remedy.

Criminals driving expensive cars while trafficking illicit wildlife products are clearly motivated by self enrichment.



ORGANISED WILDLIFE CRIME – CRIME WEBS

Organised wildlife crime relies on far-reaching, intricate crime webs that facilitate obtaining illicit wildlife products and transporting these to end markets to meet high-paying demand.

The so-called nodes and flows of trafficking create the webs – organisational nodes (towns, airports, harbours) connect the pathways along which the illicit products flow from the source country via any number of transit locations to their destination at an end market, where a consumer pays a high price for a desired product.

END MARKETS

High demand and high prices at end markets enable a long supply chain, where the value of the product increases the closer it gets to the end markets. The connections between the end markets and the source countries are usually made by influential kingpins involved in a variety of crimes.

ILLICIT TRADE ROUTES AND SUPPLY CHAINS

Organised wildlife crime relies on trade routes and supply chains that deliver illicit products from their source to their end markets and customers. A trade route consists of the geographical path along which goods are moved, while a supply chain is made up of the individuals or entities that facilitate the transport of the goods along that path via towns, border posts and ports. While illicit game meat tends to be sold locally, most high-value species products require complex transnational trade routes and supply chains.

INTERNATIONAL KINGPINS

International kingpins ensure smooth linkages between end markets and local poachers and dealers in source countries, usually with the involvement of various intermediaries along the supply chain. Kingpins tend to be in positions of power and influence that enable them to operate effectively with a high degree of immunity to getting caught.

AIDERS AND ABETTORS

A great variety of aiders and abettors facilitate wildlife

crime at various levels of the crime chain. Financiers may pay for supplies, guns or transport for poaching incursions. Different individuals may provide vehicles, firearms or inside information on a target area. Trafficking facilitators may provide temporary storage facilities, or enable the movement of firearms or illicit wildlife products past security, police or customs checkpoints.

LOCAL SYNDICATES

Criminals often work together to achieve their aims. This may be a loose association for a particular operation, or a close-knit network built up over time, active in one or several crime sectors. Syndicates usually have an influential leader and any number of members with different roles.

POACHING GANGS

Small groups of poachers who infiltrate wildlife areas to secure high-value products generally consist of a number of role players. An insider with bush skills provides local knowledge, a shooter is tasked with killing the target animal, a driver provides transport to and from the area, while others may assist with poaching logistics.

INDIVIDUAL POACHERS

A small portion of wildlife crime is carried out by individuals. This is particularly common for pangolin poaching, where individuals with bush skills and pangolin experience are tasked with collecting the animals in the wild.

Criminals attempt to traffick rhino horns out of the country towards end markets as quickly as possible.



ORGANISED WILDLIFE CRIME – IMPACTS

The diverse and far-reaching impacts of organised wildlife crime range from national security risks to the disruption of individual lives – yet the seriousness of organised wildlife crime remains underrated. The poaching and trafficking of elephant, rhinos, pangolin and other high-value wildlife create a deceptively lucrative criminal sector in Namibia. The amount of money involved, but also the firearms and potential violence being proliferated, as well as the need for complicity at various levels, all create far-reaching impacts.

NATIONAL SECURITY

Organised crime presents a range of national security risks. These are manifested through the spread of illegal firearms, the formation of crime syndicates and poaching gangs, the encouragement of corruption, racketeering and money laundering, and the risk of promoting insurrection.

ECONOMY

Namibia has made significant investments in conservation and wildlife protection over many decades. Organised wildlife crime is directly threatening rhino populations which had been carefully rebuilt at significant cost. Wildlife crime undermines Namibia's conservation successes and directly disrupts important legal economies such as tourism and conservation hunting. Sectors such as specialised rhino tourism and rhino tracking are particularly hard-hit. The money spent annually on countering wildlife crime could instead be used to address urgent human development needs. Illicit activities also bypass legitimate financial systems and tax obligations, eroding national financial integrity.

HUMAN HEALTH

The COVID-19 pandemic has starkly illustrated the devastating impacts of zoonotic diseases. While the path of this particular virus from wild animal host (most probably a bat) to humans has not been conclusively proven, the unhygienic capture, keeping, slaughtering and trafficking of wild animals is the cause. According to World Health Organisation data, about 75 per

cent of new or emerging infectious diseases that have affected humans over the past three decades originate in animals⁹. Wildlife crime is carried out without any health or hygiene controls and represents a distinct danger of new zoonoses, in which animal diseases infect a human host.

COMMUNITY STABILITY & INDIVIDUAL LIVELIHOODS

Criminal activity destabilises communities and individual households. It requires either complicity or deception and causes mistrust and fear within communities and family units. It reduces socio-economic stability by disrupting wildlife-based livelihoods and the ability to earn a legitimate income. The incarceration of criminals leaves families without breadwinners, creating additional hardship.

MITIGATING THE IMPACTS

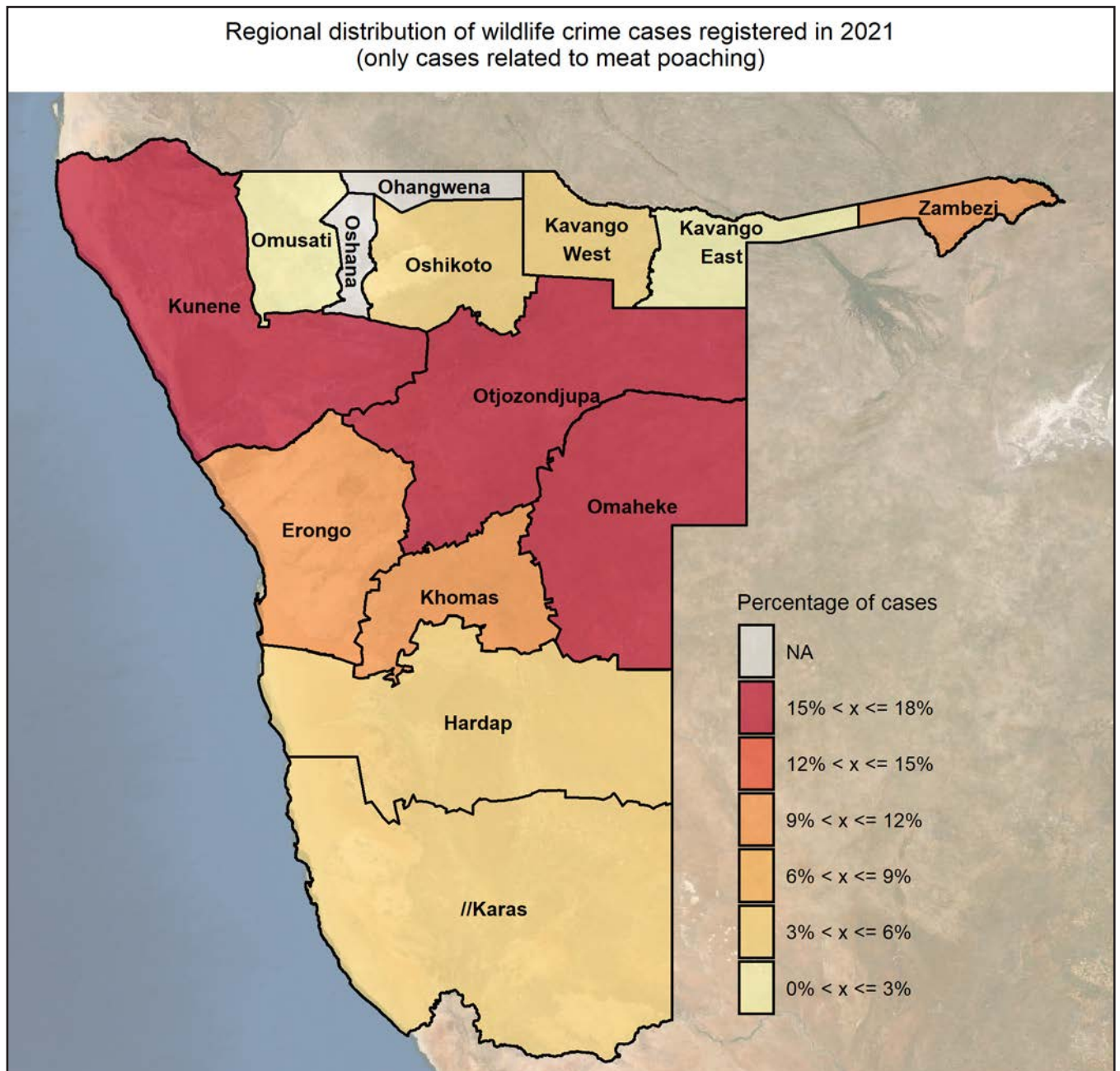
Namibia has no direct influence on eliminating or even reducing external market demand, with the result that interventions to counter poaching and trafficking in Namibia can only address local symptoms and not end causes. This is a ceaseless task – as long as there is a high-paying international demand and potential rewards appear higher than risks, some attempts to secure products will be made. Simply stopping poachers will not stop the problem, yet shifting the risk reward ratio clearly in favour of law enforcement will reduce the prevalence of organised crime. Together with other interventions, this can reduce poaching losses to manageable levels.

The proliferation of illegal firearms represents a national security risk.



II. MEAT POACHING TRENDS 2015–2021

II.1 REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION of REGISTERED CASES related to MEAT POACHING during 2021:



Regional distribution of meat-poaching cases

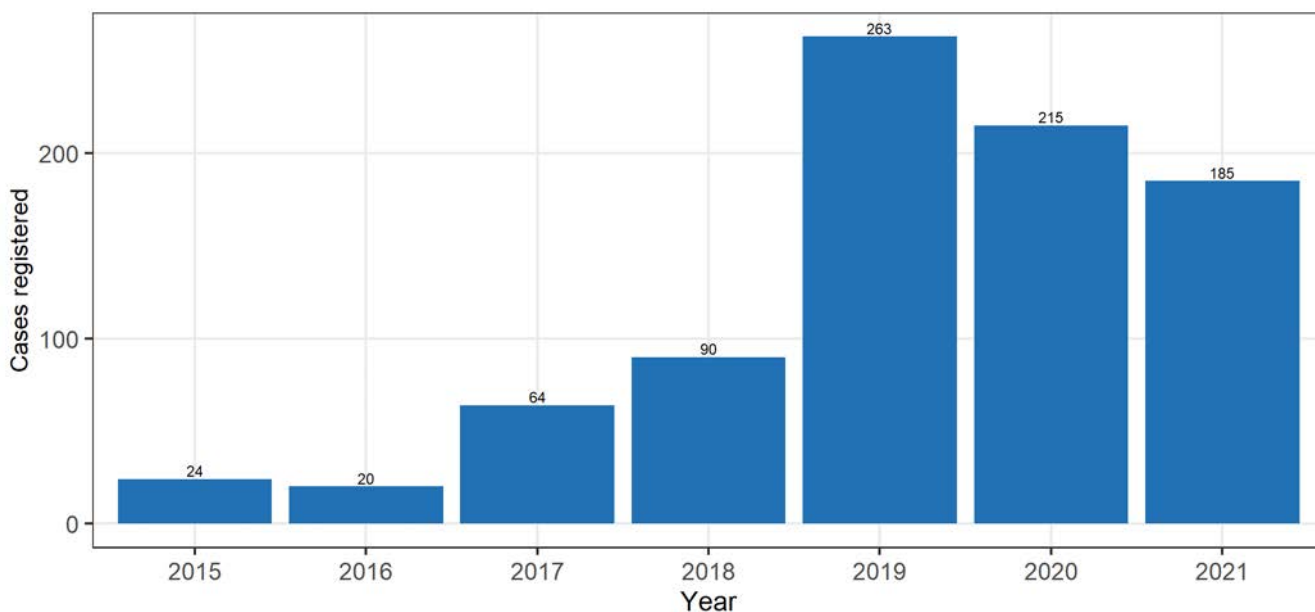
- Meat poaching is prevalent right across Namibia, but is clearly most prolific in the Kunene, Otjozondjupa and Omaheke regions.
- The map indicates the regions in which cases were registered, not necessarily where the crime was committed.
- Significant differences in the number of cases registered in various regions may be influenced by a range of factors, including:
 - Wildlife densities are generally lower in the south and central north than other parts of the country, resulting in fewer opportunities for meat poachers
 - Different regions have varying degrees of wildlife protection; in some regions local land-holders work more closely with law enforcement personnel to report and follow up on poaching incidents than in other regions

The gemsbok is a Namibian wildlife icon. It appears in the national coat of arms and in the logo of the Directorate of Parks and Wildlife of the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism. It is also a primary target for meat poaching.



11.2 CASES REGISTERED (meat poaching)

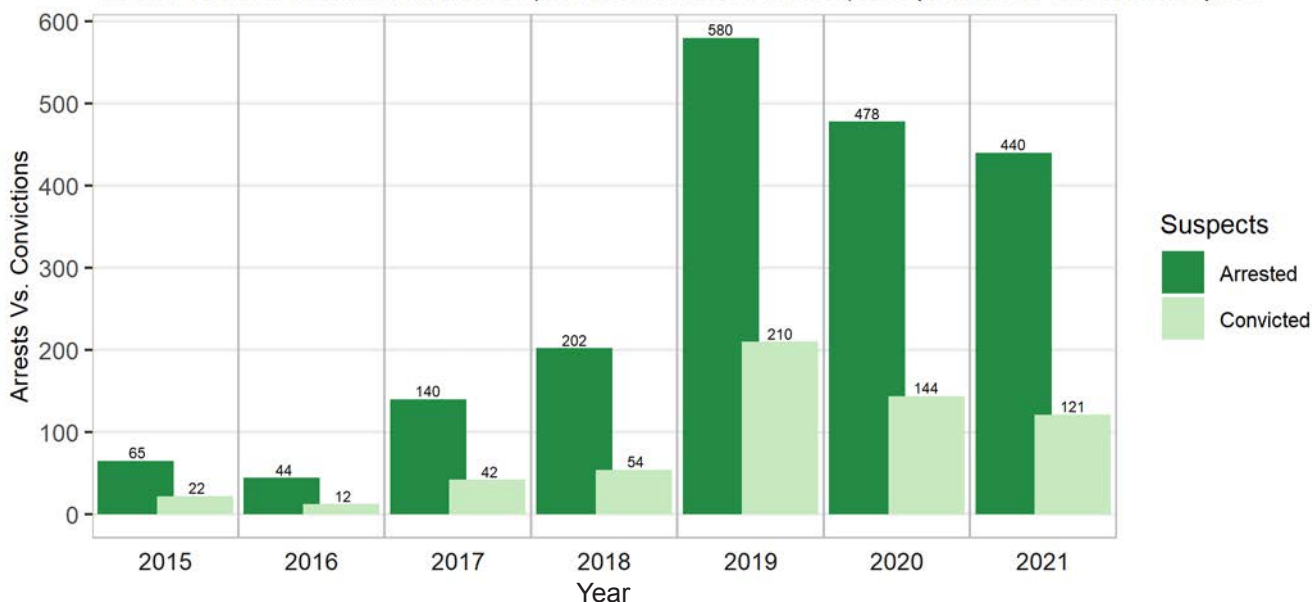
Wildlife crime cases registered per year (meat poaching cases only)



11.3 ARRESTS versus CONVICTIONS (meat poaching)

Annual arrests vs. their current conviction status (meat poaching cases only)

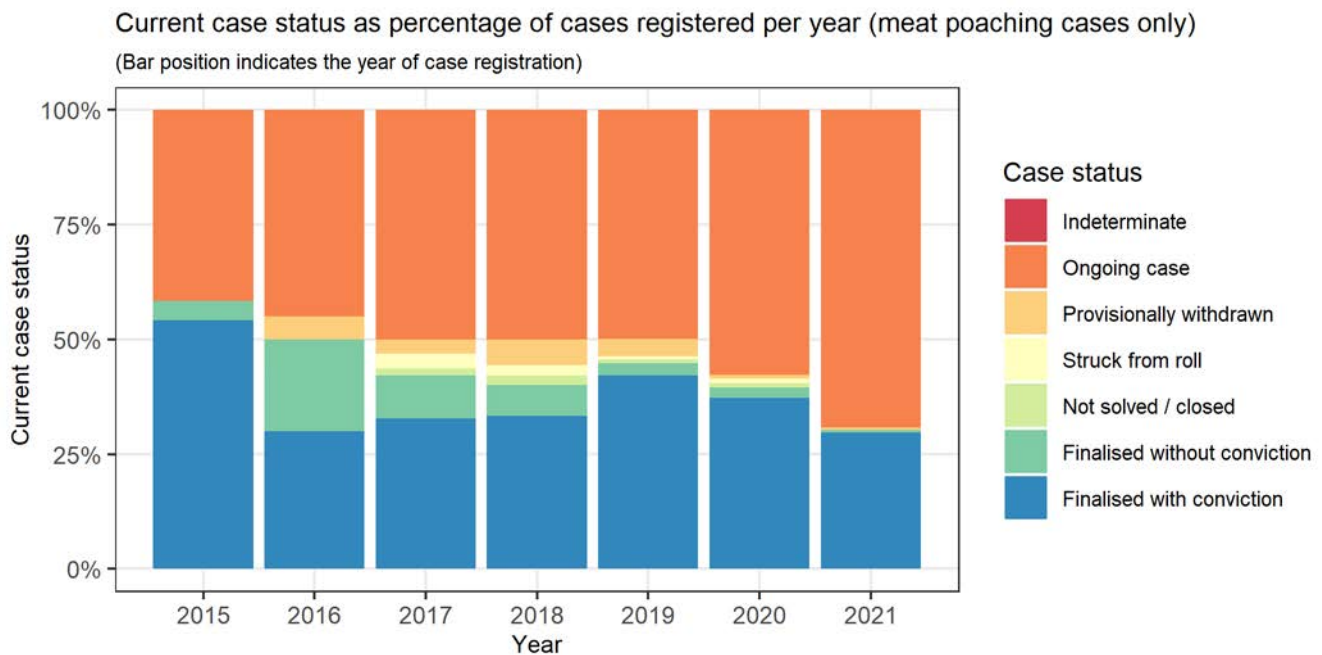
The bars "Convicted" indicate the number of suspects who were arrested in the respective year and have been convicted by now.



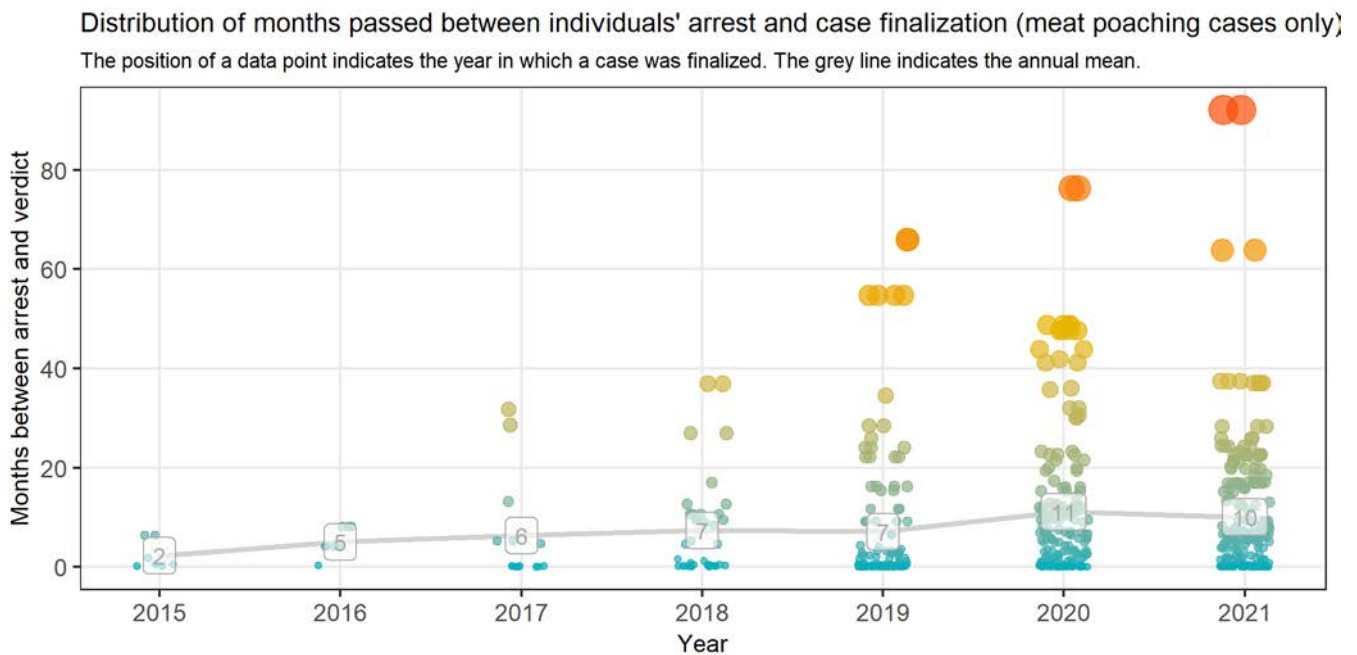
Meat poaching cases, arrests and convictions

- **Meat-poaching cases registered** have escalated alarmingly over the past three years, with a massive spike in 2019; the slight downward trend in 2020 and 2021 is likely to be the result of a variety of factors, including an improved law enforcement response to the escalation, a more concerted response by land holders who are working more closely with NAMPOL and MEFT, and the effects of heightened police checks and movement restrictions during the pandemic.
- **Annual arrests vs. current conviction status** (as at end December 2021) indicate that the number of arrests is exceeding the ability of the judiciary to finalise cases and convict perpetrators; of all suspects arrested in 2015, only one third had been convicted by the end of 2021.

11.4 CURRENT CASE STATUS (meat poaching)



11.5 TIME BETWEEN ARREST and CASE FINALISATION (meat poaching)



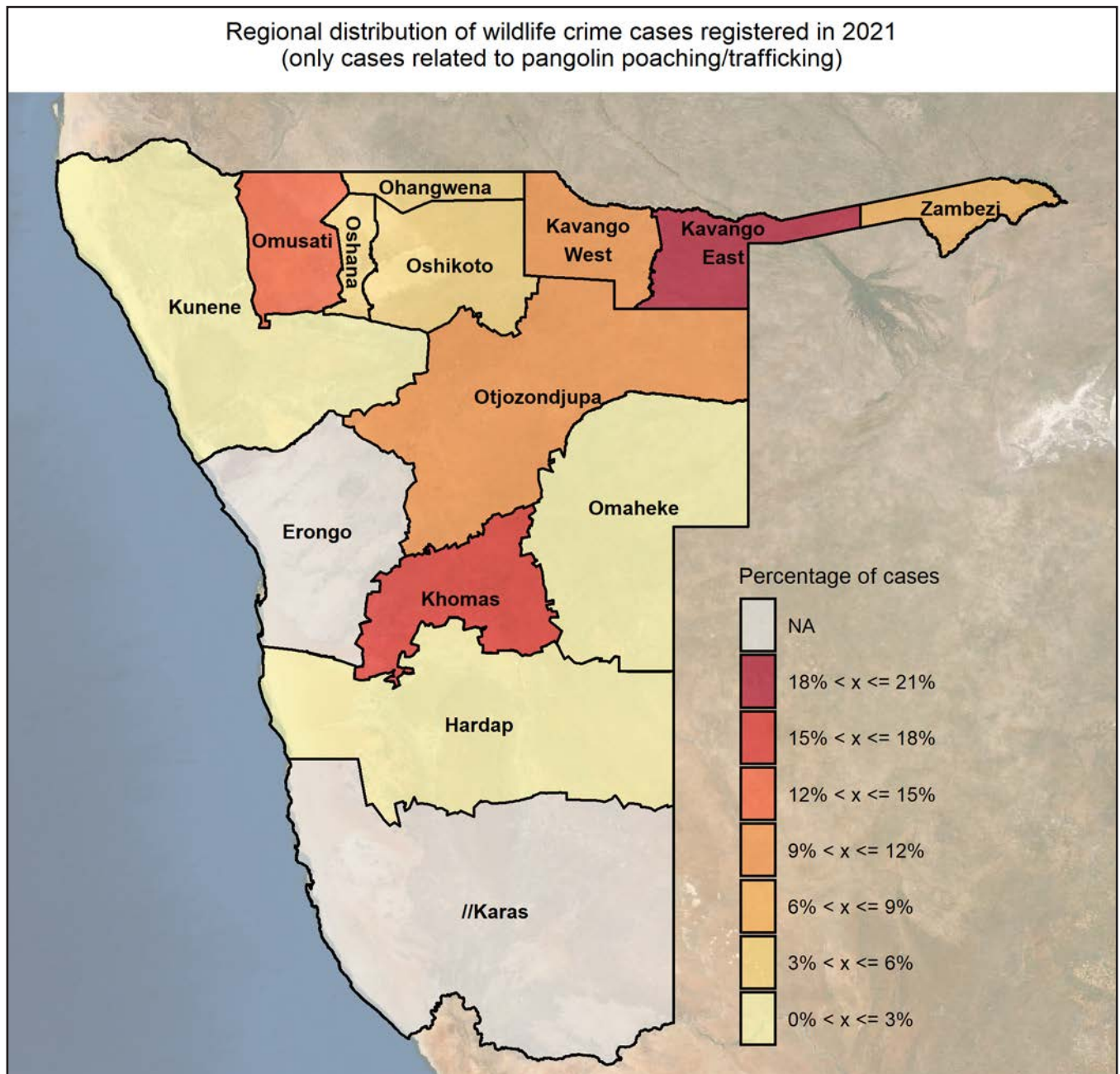
Current case status and time between arrest and case finalisation in meat-poaching cases

- **Current case status** (as at end December 2021) is shown as a percentage of cases registered per year; for example, of all cases registered in 2015, about 55% had been finalised with convictions at the end of 2021, about 5% of cases had been finalised without a conviction, and about 40% of cases were ongoing; ideally the percentage of finalised cases should increase with time, so that earlier years should have no or very few ongoing cases; indeterminate indicates a current status that has not yet been defined in the database.
- **Time between arrest and case finalisation** is generally shorter in meat-poaching cases than other organised wildlife crime categories, as this involves more limited trafficking chains and fewer intermediaries; most cases are finalised within a year; extremely lengthy cases, such as those registered in 2013 and finalised in 2021 are isolated cases in which failures within the justice system occurred.



12. PANGOLIN POACHING AND TRAFFICKING TRENDS 2015–2021

12.1 REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION of REGISTERED CASES related to PANGOLIN during 2021:



Regional distribution of pangolin cases

- Pangolin are believed to occur in all regions of Namibia, although there is currently only limited knowledge of population densities.
- The map indicates registered cases of pangolin trafficking, which do not necessarily reflect pangolin distribution in the regions.
- Pangolin skins, scales or live animals may have been transported over large distances after the animals were poached; seizures may regularly occur in different regions to where the animals or products were first collected in the wild.
- The high prevalence of pangolin trafficking in the Khomas Region is likely to reflect products being brought to the capital for intended sale, rather than a high prevalence of pangolin poaching in the Khomas Region.
- The high prevalence of pangolin trafficking in the Kavango East Region may represent a community misperception of the local demand for pangolin products, possibly combined with relatively high pangolin occurrence in that region, as well as some products smuggled into the region from neighbouring countries.



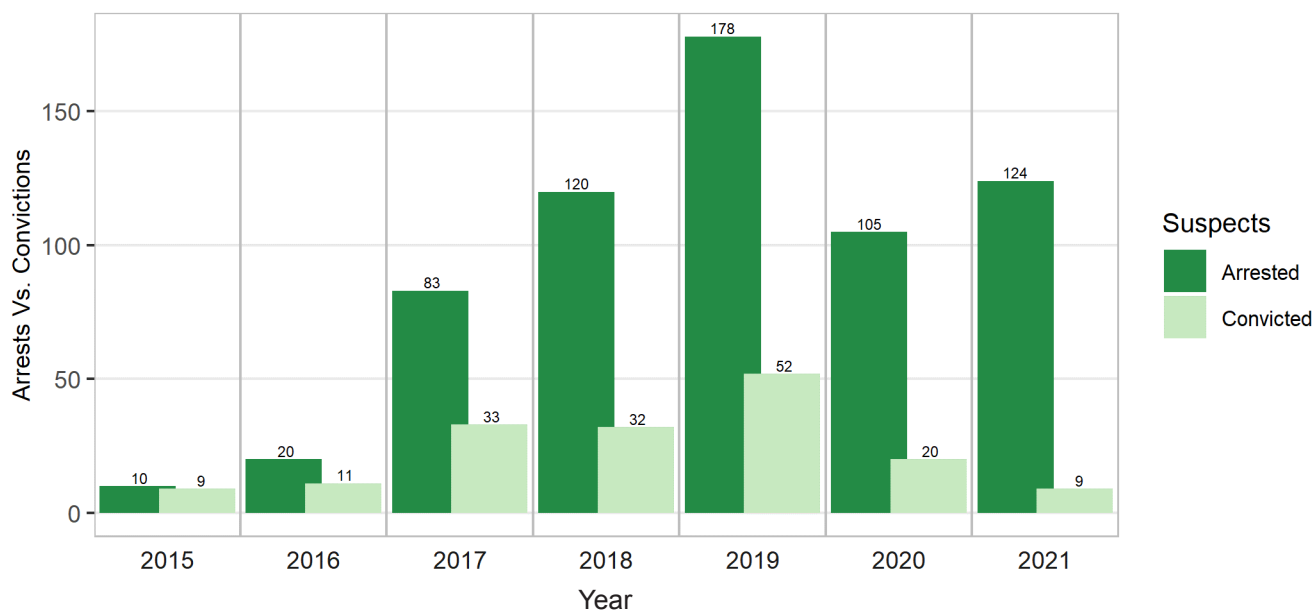
Pangolin research, central Namibia.

Pangolins are secretive and mostly nocturnal insectivores, living on a diet of termites and ants. While current information regarding their distribution and density at a national level is patchy – and the impacts of poaching are poorly known – dedicated research catalysed by the Namibian Pangolin Working Group is seeking to fill these knowledge gaps.

12.2 ARRESTS versus CONVICTIONS (pangolin)

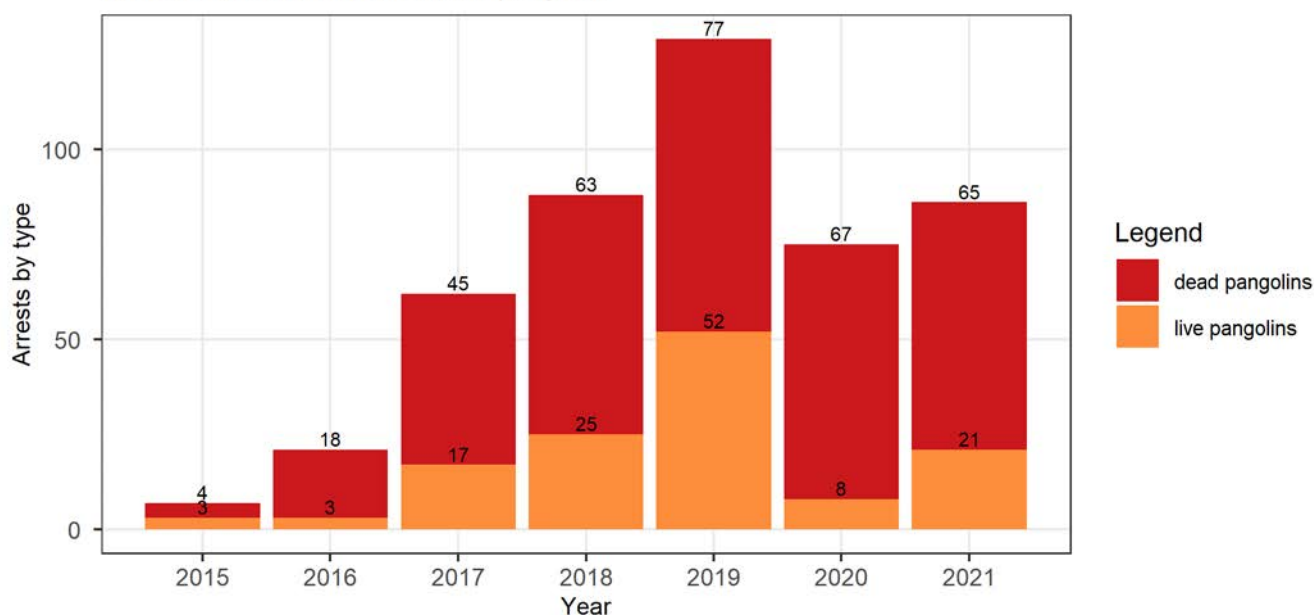
Annual arrests vs. their current conviction status (pangolin cases only)

The bars "Convicted" indicate the number of suspects who were arrested in the respective year and have been convicted by now.



12.3 SEIZURES (pangolin)

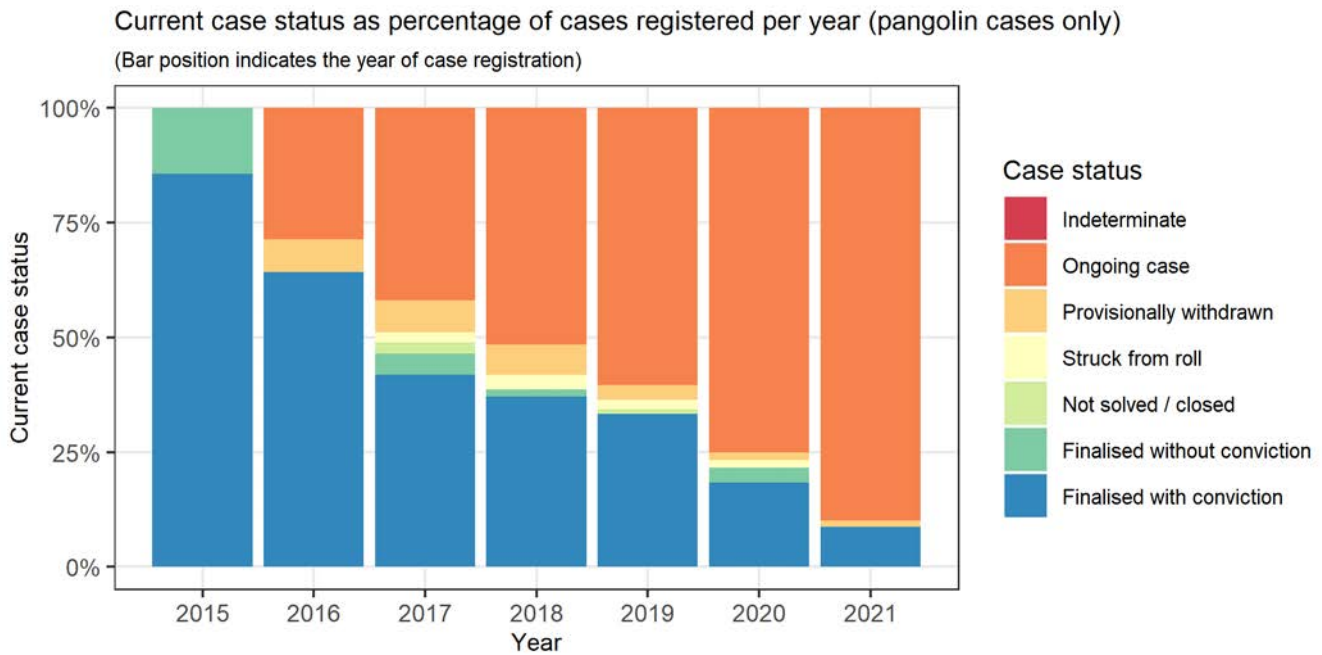
Annual seizures of live and dead pangolins



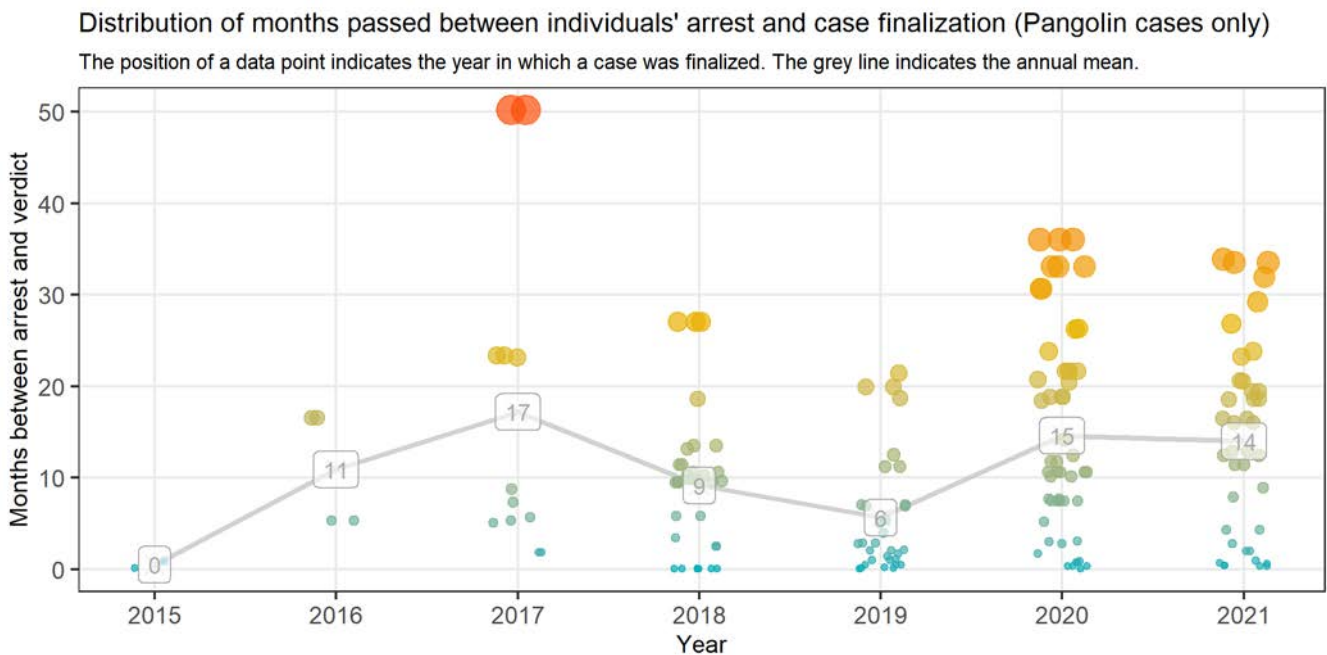
Arrests, convictions and seizures related to pangolin

- **Annual arrests vs. current conviction status** (as at end December 2021) indicate that while convictions in pangolin cases still lag clearly behind arrests, these are gradually increasing as cases are being successfully finalised; all cases for 2015, over 70% of cases for 2016 and over 50% of cases for 2017 had been finalised by the end of 2021; while not all cases result in convictions, the conviction rate is high (see also 12.4, opposite); arrests are almost always combined directly with seizures of pangolin products and their trends are closely linked.
- **Seizures** of pangolin have skyrocketed since 2015, mirroring international trends (see p. 45 for more details); a dip in arrests and seizures during 2020 is likely to have been caused by the heightened police checks and movement restrictions during the pandemic; as these have been reduced during 2021, pangolin arrests and seizures have again shown an increasing trend.

12.4 CURRENT CASE STATUS (pangolin)



12.5 TIME BETWEEN ARREST and CASE FINALISATION (pangolin)



Current case status and time between arrest and case finalisation in pangolin cases

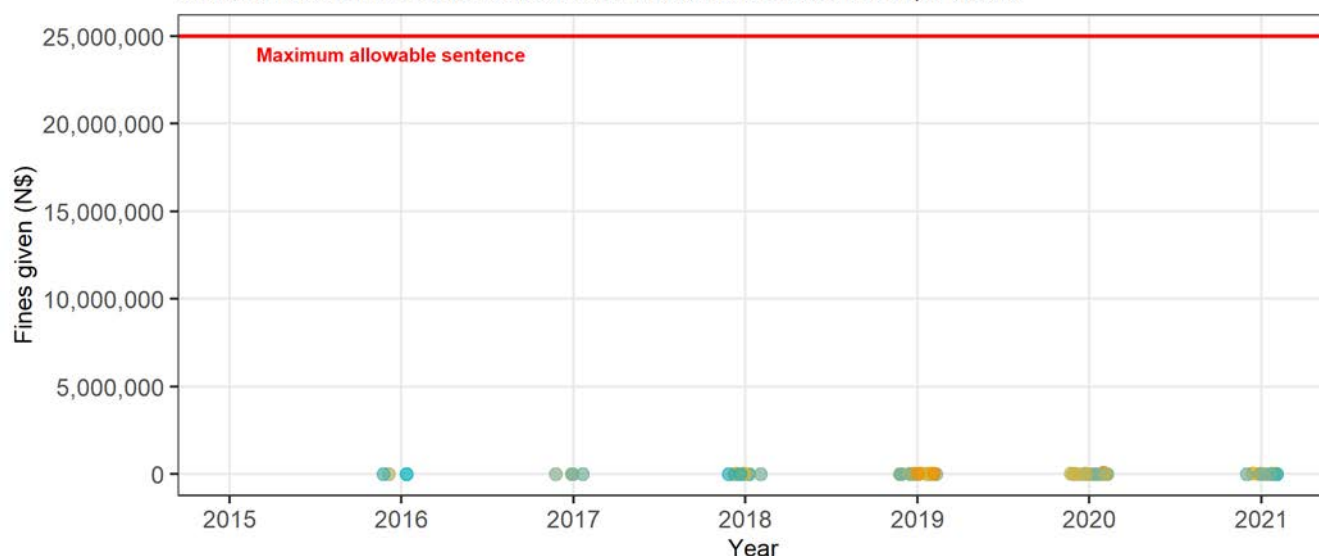
- **Current case status** (as at end December 2021) generally shows a positive trend for pangolin cases; all cases registered in 2015 have been finalised, 90% with convictions; more recent years have progressively lower finalisation rates, as cases take time to be completed; the percentage of convictions remains high for all finalised cases; indeterminate indicates a current status that has not yet been defined in the database.
- **Time between arrest and case finalisation** has varied significantly in recent years, though this is on average shorter than for elephant and rhino cases; the trend towards faster finalisation from 2017 to 2019 is likely to have been reversed by case delays caused by the pandemic; the extremely drawn-out cases finalised in 2017 are an anomaly in which failures within the justice system occurred.



12.6 MAXIMUM versus ACTUAL FINES (pangolin trafficking)

Distribution of fines (N\$) issued for illegal possession and dealing of pangolin products

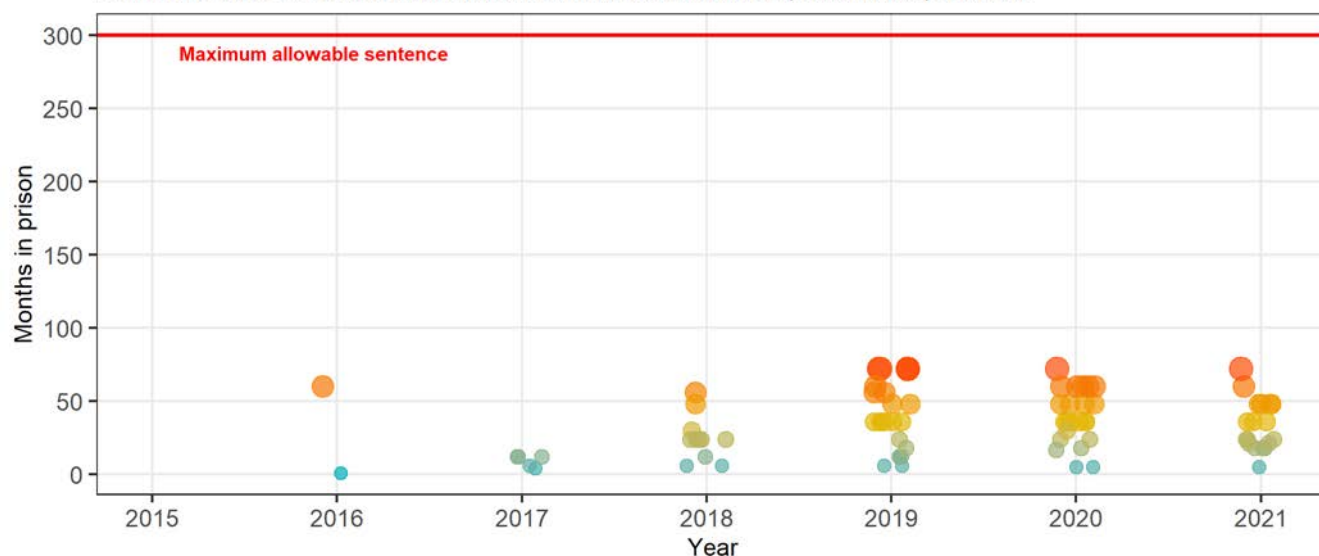
Charges were laid under Section 4 (1)(a) and (1)(b) of the Controlled Wildlife Products and Trade Act 9 of 2008, as amended Act 6 of 2017. The red line indicates the maximum allowable fine as per the Act.



12.7 MAXIMUM versus ACTUAL PRISON TERMS (pangolin trafficking)

Distribution of imprisonment (months) issued for illegal possession and dealing of pangolin products

Charges were laid under Section 4 (1)(a) and (1)(b) under the Controlled Wildlife Products and Trade Act 9 of 2008, as amended Act 6 of 2017. The red line indicates the maximum allowable imprisonment as per the Act.



Maximum versus actual sentences for pangolin trafficking

- Namibian laws stipulate maximum penalties for all defined transgressions; the graphs show the gap between maximum sentences as stipulated in the relevant legislation and actual sentences handed down by the courts; penalties may consist of a fine, a prison term, or both.
- Most perpetrators of pangolin trafficking are rural community members with extremely limited financial means; high fines in these cases are meaningless, as the perpetrators are generally unable to pay even a relatively modest fine.
- Prison terms of between four and six years are already significant punishment for a rural community member attempting to escape poverty.
- The maximum sentences of N\$ 25,000,000 and 25 years imprisonment have never been applied; these are generally reserved for complex crimes perpetrated by ruthless transnational criminals, not local community members.
- The challenges of serving appropriate sentences for wildlife crimes are discussed in detail on p. 29.

The unique challenge of countering pangolin poaching and trafficking in Namibia

Pangolins – small, secretive, nocturnal insectivores – present a unique conservation challenge. There are eight pangolin species on Earth, four in Asia and four in Africa. These creatures are the only mammals covered in scales (a feature more typical of reptiles and fish). It is the scales that are driving the demand for pangolin products. While pangolin scales have been used in medicinal applications (and the meat as a source of food) in both Africa and Asia for centuries, rapid human population growth and a rising standard of living in Asia have created a high-paying demand that far outstrips any sustainable pangolin harvests. To protect the animals, all eight species have been placed on CITES Appendix I, prohibiting all international trade. This has fuelled the illicit trade – pangolins have become the most-trafficked wild animals in the world¹⁰.

Due to their size and secretive nature, pangolins are difficult to study. Our knowledge of the distribution and density of Temminck's ground pangolin, the only species occurring in Namibia, is still very limited. We know even less about the impacts poaching is having on the population. The distribution and population numbers of elephant and rhinos (the other species of greatest current conservation concern) are well known through regular censuses. Discovered carcasses of these species give a relatively accurate indication of poaching impacts. We do not know how many pangolins occur in Namibia, nor how many are successfully trafficked out of the country. The situation is exacerbated by a lack of national data on pangolin growth rates and mortalities. We currently simply

do not know how the combination of poaching and other anthropogenic impacts such as roadkills and electrocution along electric fences are affecting the population. While there have been some records of people eating pangolin in Namibia, the animals are not used extensively for bushmeat here, as they are in other countries. The Namibian Pangolin Working Group, established in 2020, has initiated research efforts to better understand the biology, population dynamics and distribution of Temminck's ground pangolin, as well as the drivers and impacts of poaching on the population.

The spike in pangolin trafficking in Namibia, recorded through police seizures, mirrors international trends. UNODC data indicates a steep increase in the volumes of pangolin products seized from 2014 onwards. A recent report has noted that 'the sheer volume of seizures ... suggests unsustainable harvesting'¹¹. The assumption is likely to be applicable to Namibia. Here the number of seized pangolins tripled each year from 2015 to 2017 and peaked at 129 animals in 2019. A decline in seizures in 2020 may be attributable to pandemic influences. The past year has already seen a renewed increase in seizures to 2018 levels.

While it has thus far been assumed that pangolins are mostly picked up by chance by rural people, reports from other countries, where pangolins are also traded for bushmeat¹², imply that specialised pangolin poachers may be emerging in Namibia. A better understanding of the diverse factors affecting pangolin conservation is vital for their protection.

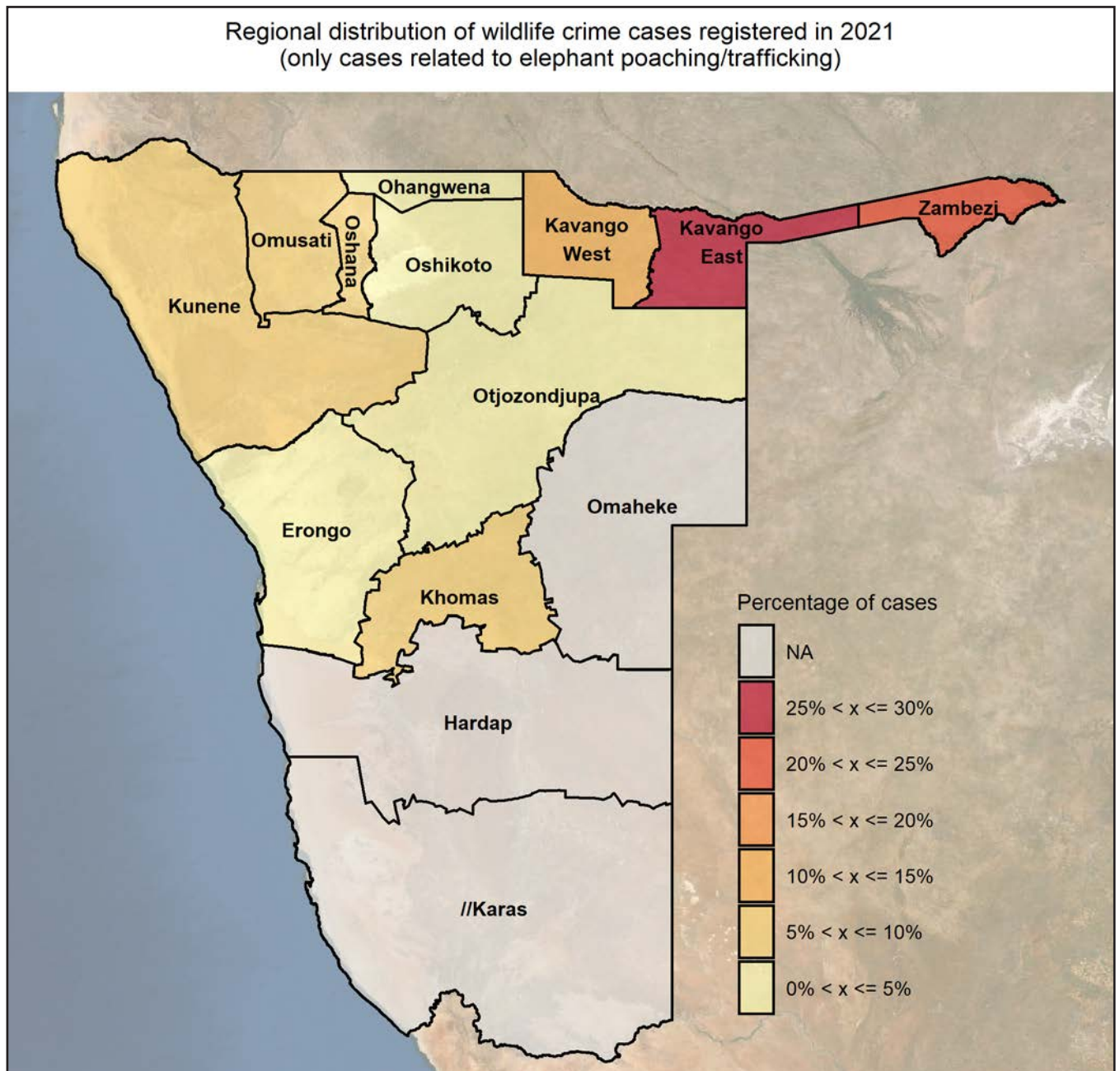


Pangolin skin seizure, Windhoek, November 2021



13. ELEPHANT POACHING AND TRAFFICKING TRENDS 2015–2021

13.1 REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION of REGISTERED CASES related to ELEPHANT during 2021:



Regional distribution of elephant cases

- Elephant occur only in the northern half of Namibia in four partly interlinked sub-populations:
 - Bwabwata, Mudumu and Nkasa Rupara national parks and adjacent community conservancies and communal farming areas (this population exhibits significant seasonal transboundary movement)
 - Khaudum National Park and adjacent community conservancies and communal farming areas
 - Etosha National Park and adjacent community conservancies and communal and freehold farming areas
 - Erongo–Kunene Community Conservation Area and adjacent communal and freehold farming areas.
- The number of elephants poached in Namibia has been reduced to very low levels, yet ivory trafficking remains prevalent.
- The map indicates where cases of elephant crimes (mostly ivory trafficking) were registered, and does not reflect elephant distribution.
- Significant amounts of ivory originate outside Namibia and are brought into the country for attempted illicit sale or onward trafficking.
- Ivory trafficking is most prevalent in the Kavango and Zambezi regions.

Namibia's elephant population is at its most numerous – and problematic – in more than 150 years. Human–wildlife conflict is a major issue in many parts of the elephant's range. Poaching has been curbed and has had a negligible impact on population growth, yet trafficking of ivory originating from outside Namibia remains a challenge.

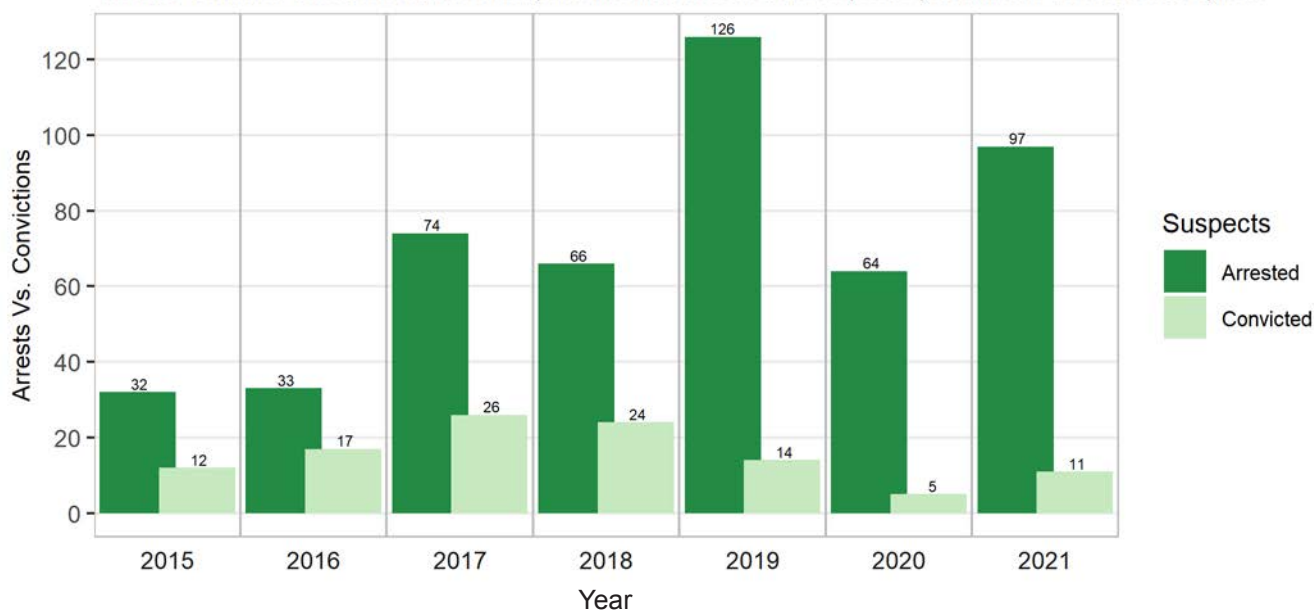
*Large elephant herd at a waterhole,
Khaudum National Park.*



13.2 ARRESTS versus CONVICTIONS (elephant)

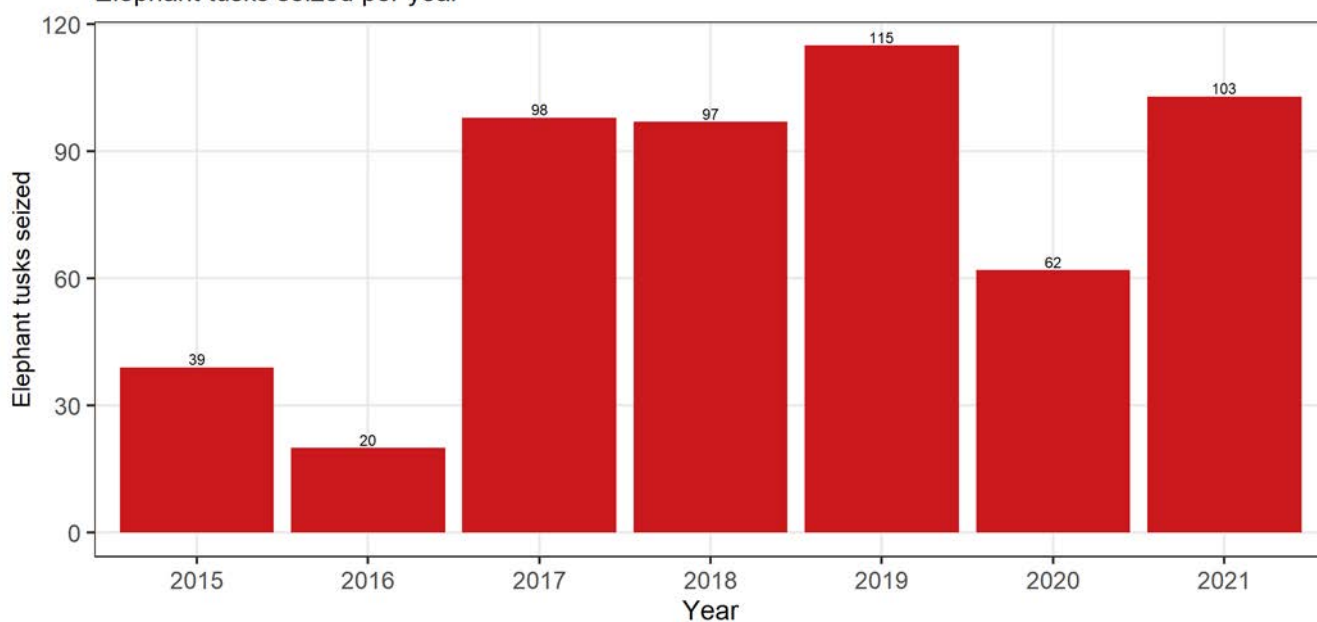
Annual arrests vs. their current conviction status (elephant cases only)

The bars "Convicted" indicate the number of suspects who were arrested in the respective year and have been convicted by now.



13.3 SEIZURES (elephant)

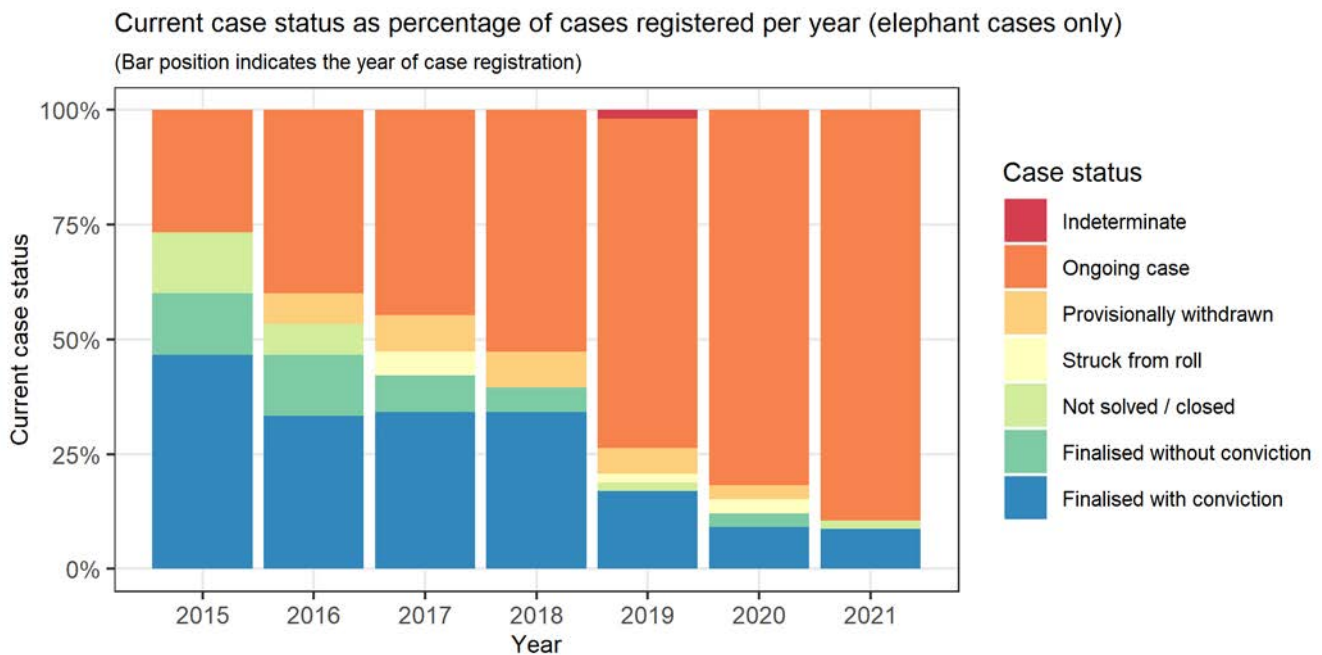
Elephant tusks seized per year



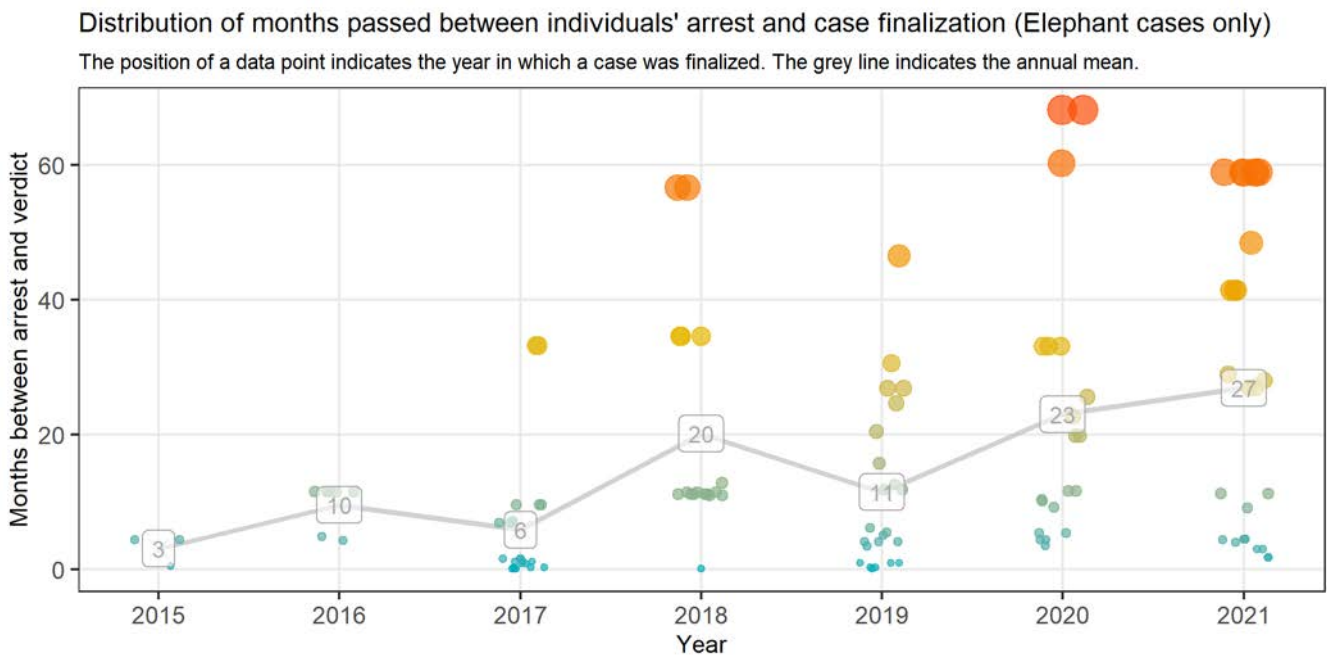
Arrests, convictions and seizures related to elephant

- **Annual arrests vs. current conviction status** (as at end December 2021) indicate that convictions in elephant cases still lag clearly behind arrests, as some cases from all years since 2015 are still ongoing; the massive spike in arrests in 2019 and a trend towards similar levels in 2021 are straining the judiciary; arrests over the past three years have in most cases been linked to ivory seizures; few poaching incidents have been recorded in these years, though arrests related to poaching in the northwest have taken place.
- **Seizures** of ivory have remained high since 2017, even though poaching in Namibia has been curbed to low levels; clearly, much of the seized ivory is being brought into Namibia from animals killed in other countries, though it is rarely possible to link seizures to carcasses (see also p. 51 for more details); a dip in arrests and seizures during 2020 is likely to have been caused by the heightened police checks and movement restrictions during the pandemic; as these have been reduced during 2021, ivory seizures have again increased to near pre-pandemic levels.

13.4 CURRENT CASE STATUS (elephant)



13.5 TIME BETWEEN ARREST and CASE FINALISATION (elephant)

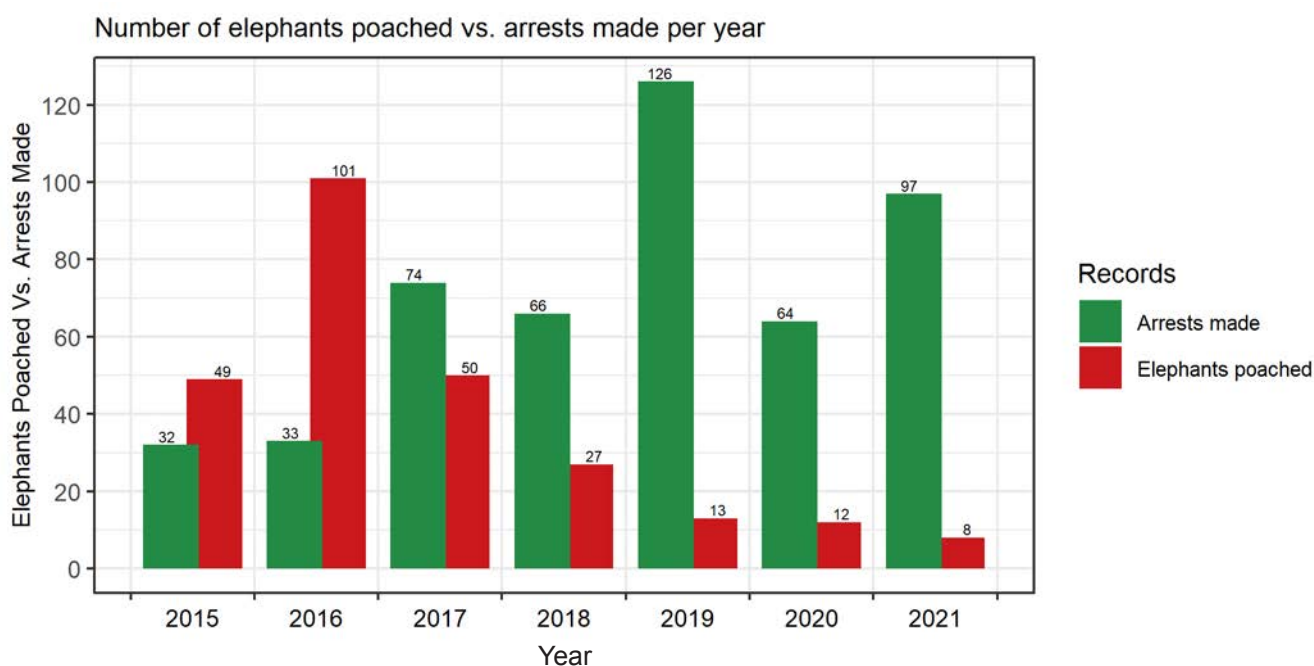


Current case status and time between arrest and case finalisation in elephant cases

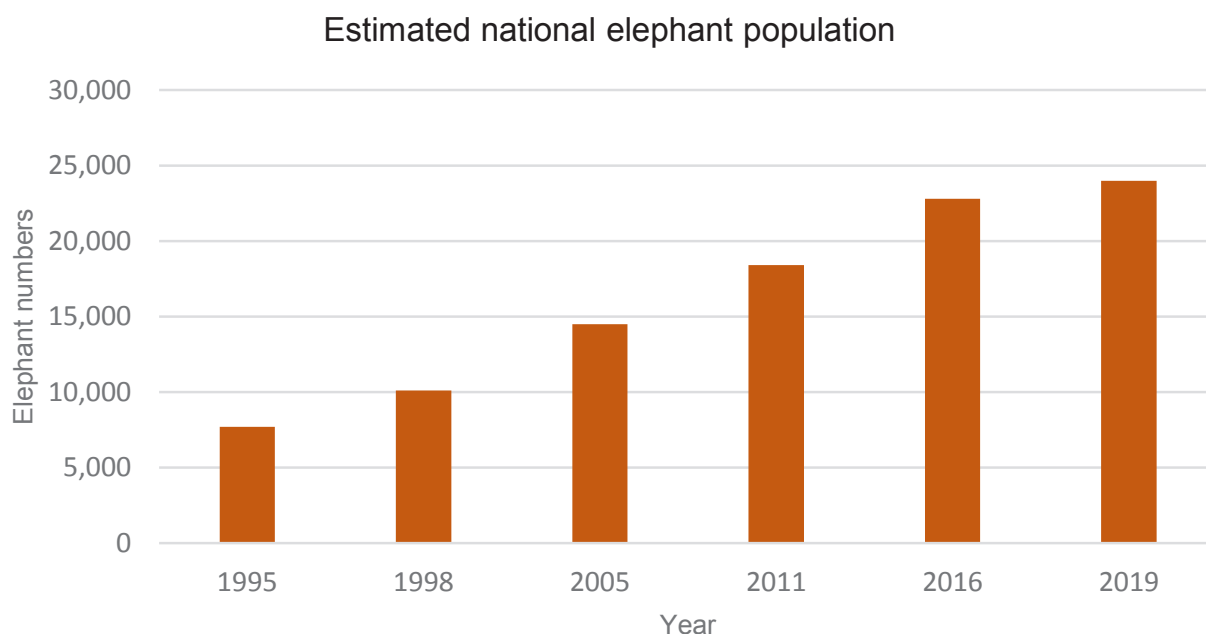
- **Current case status** (as at end December 2021) generally shows a positive finalisation trend in elephant cases; close to 75% of cases registered in 2015 have been finalised and 47% of all registered cases in that year had achieved convictions, while just over 25% were still ongoing; more recent years have progressively lower finalisation rates, as cases take time to be completed, yet the conviction rate of finalised cases remains relatively high; indeterminate indicates a current status that has not yet been defined in the database.
- **Time between arrest and case finalisation** has varied significantly for elephant cases, with some cases finalised in 2020 and 2021 having taken 5 or more years to complete.



13.6 Comparison of POACHING ESTIMATES versus ARRESTS (elephant)



13.7 INCREASE in NAMIBIA'S ELEPHANT POPULATION



Proactive law enforcement and conservation trends related to elephants

- **Poaching estimates vs. arrests** clearly show that while poaching incidents in Namibia have been successfully curbed to low levels, arrests remain extremely high; the number of arrests per year has been closely related to seizures of ivory, rather than elephants poached in Namibia (see ivory seizures graph p. 48); much of the ivory seized in Namibia clearly originates from elephants killed in other countries, with the ivory smuggled into Namibia for sale or onward trafficking.
- **Increase in Namibia's elephant population** has been recorded through aerial surveys carried out in the years shown in the graph; most of Namibia's elephant sub-populations have shown significant increases; the sub-populations in the eastern parts of the Erongo–Kunene Community Conservation Area, as well as those in Khaudum, Bwabwata, Mudumu and Nkasa Rupara national parks and adjacent communal farming areas have shown the greatest increases; while the population in Bwabwata, Mudumu and Nkasa Rupara moves freely across international borders, the other populations are relatively sedentary, with more localised, seasonal movements.

The unique challenge of countering elephant poaching and trafficking in Namibia

Namibia's elephant population has tripled since the country's independence in 1990. The current estimate for the national population, based on regular census data, stands at over 24,000 individuals¹³ (see opposite page, at bottom). This population consists of a number of distinct sub-populations with different vulnerabilities and conservation priorities¹⁴.

Discovered carcasses, ivory seizures and elephant population statistics are used as three key indicators of poaching rates and impacts across Africa. The UNODC has reported a clear decline in illegally killed elephants over the past decade, after a peak in 2011. A slight increase has again been recorded in recent years in both southern and eastern Africa. Well over half of all elephants poached in Africa in recent years were killed in southern Africa¹⁵. Southern Africa is today home to well over half of all elephants in Africa. Namibia's elephants make up around one-tenth of this population. After a spike in ivory prices in destination countries in 2014, prices had dropped to pre 2010 levels by 2018. A steep decline in prices paid to poachers for ivory in East Africa was also recorded¹⁶. There is currently no comparable data from Namibia.

Minimal elephant poaching occurred in the first decades after Namibia's independence, yet a sudden spike was recorded over the past decade. This was countered through the deployment of national security forces to priority parks, coupled with improved law enforcement interventions. Counted by the number of affected animals, elephant ivory nonetheless continues to make up the second-highest high-value wildlife

product currently seized in Namibia (after pangolin). The 103 tusks seized in 2021 equate to at least 52 dead elephants. This number is likely to be higher, as traffickers often sell individual tusks and numerous unmatched tusks are seized.

While the systematic cataloguing of Namibian elephant mortalities still needs to be improved, it is clear that a large portion of the seized ivory originates from elephants killed outside Namibia. Elephants known to have been poached in Namibia during 2021 account for less than 15 per cent of the ivory seized in the past year. Some investigations have linked seized tusks with the carcass of the poached elephant, yet this is rare. Most seized tusks can't be traced back to a carcass.

Significant seizures of both ivory and rhino horn during 2021 in the Democratic Republic of Congo, bound for the USA¹⁷, suggest that this may be an important trade route for contraband out of Africa, while the DRC also accounts for over half of all domestic ivory seizures. It is also clear that Asia is not the only destination market for ivory and rhino horn, although Vietnam, China and Cambodia currently make up close to 90 per cent of known ivory destinations¹⁸.

The increase in seizures in Namibia from 2017 onwards and the concomitant decline in poaching losses can be attributed at least in part to improved anti-poaching and law enforcement interventions. Yet while the seizures are disrupting the flow of illicit ivory, they address neither the end-market demand, nor the source-country supply, both of which are largely outside Namibia.



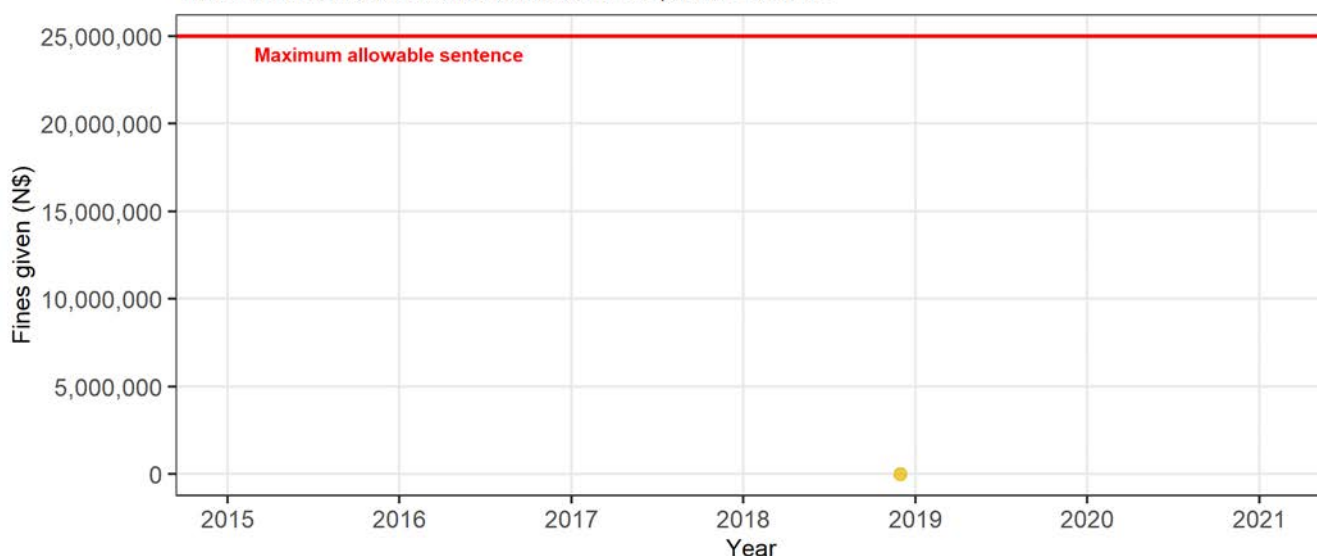
Ivory seized from a Zambian national, northeastern Namibia, December 2021



13.8 MAXIMUM versus ACTUAL FINES (elephant poaching)

Annual distribution of fines (N\$) issued for illegal hunting of elephant

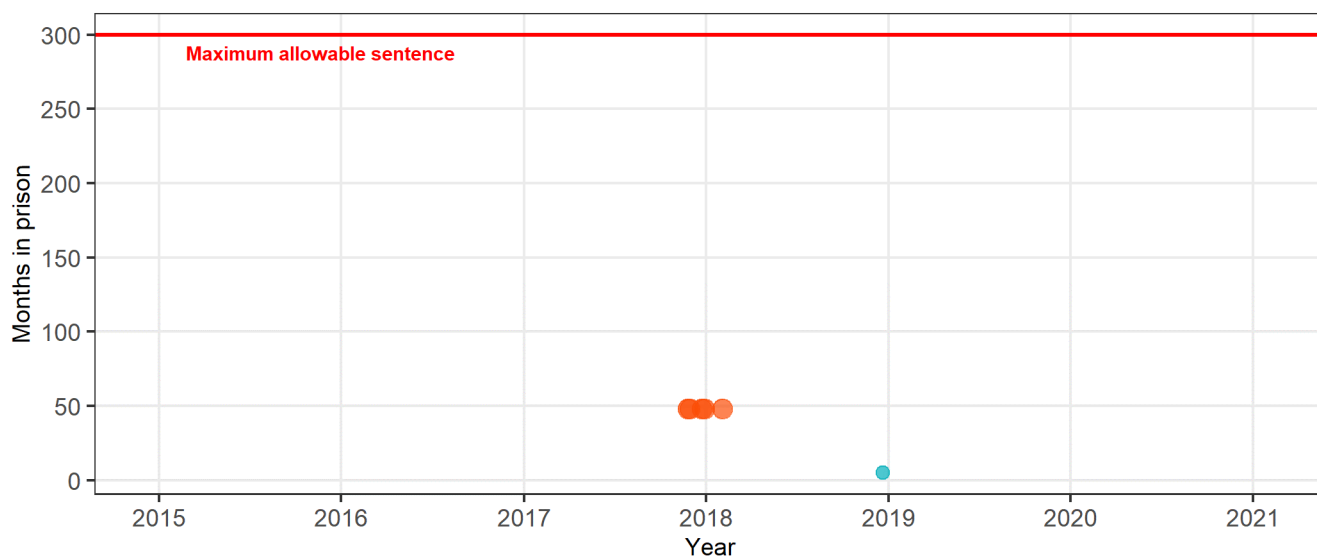
Charges were laid under Section 26 of the Nature Conservation Ordinance 4 of 1975, as amended Act 3 of 2017. The red line indicates the maximum allowable fine as per the Ordinance.



13.9 MAXIMUM versus ACTUAL PRISON TERMS (elephant poaching)

Annual distribution of imprisonment (months) issued for illegal hunting of elephant

Charges were laid under Section 26 of the Nature Conservation Ordinance 4 of 1975, as amended Act 3 of 2017. The red line indicates the maximum allowable imprisonment as per the Ordinance.



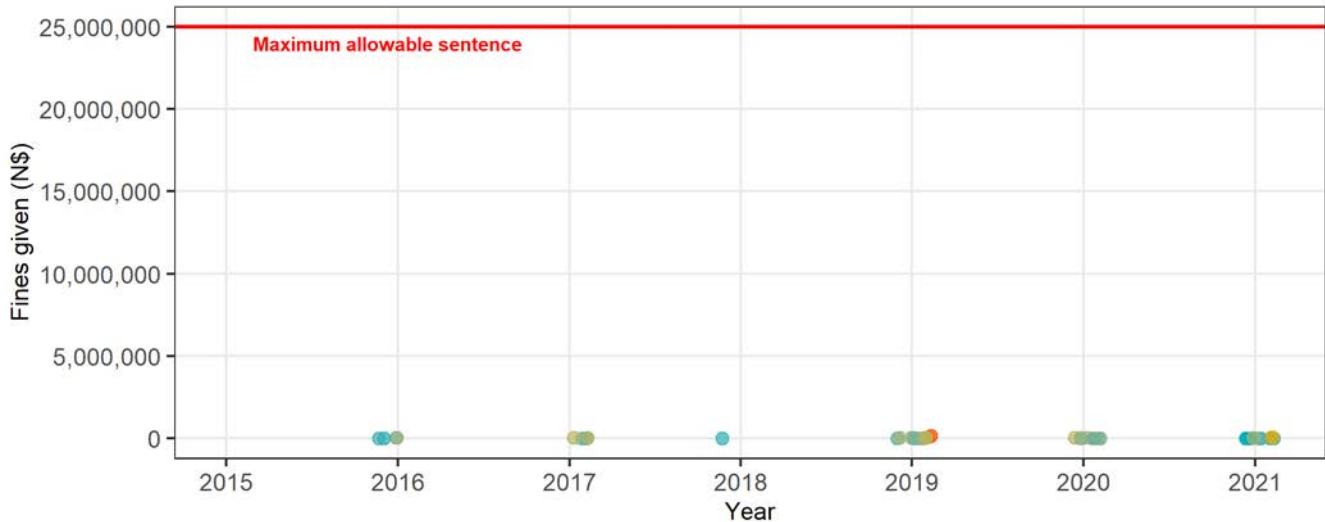
Maximum versus actual sentences related to elephant poaching

- Namibian laws stipulate maximum penalties for all defined transgressions; the graphs show the gap between maximum sentences as stipulated in the relevant legislation and actual sentences handed down by the courts; penalties may consist of a fine, a prison term, or both.
- Very few perpetrators have been convicted of elephant poaching in Namibia; most of these have received a direct prison term of 4 years without the option of a fine.
- The maximum sentences of N\$ 25,000,000 and 25 years imprisonment have never been applied; these are generally reserved for complex crimes perpetrated by ruthless transnational criminals, not local community members.
- The challenges of serving appropriate sentences for wildlife crimes are discussed in detail on p. 29.

13.10 MAXIMUM versus ACTUAL FINES (elephant trafficking)

Annual distribution of fines (N\$) issued for illegal possession and dealing of elephant products

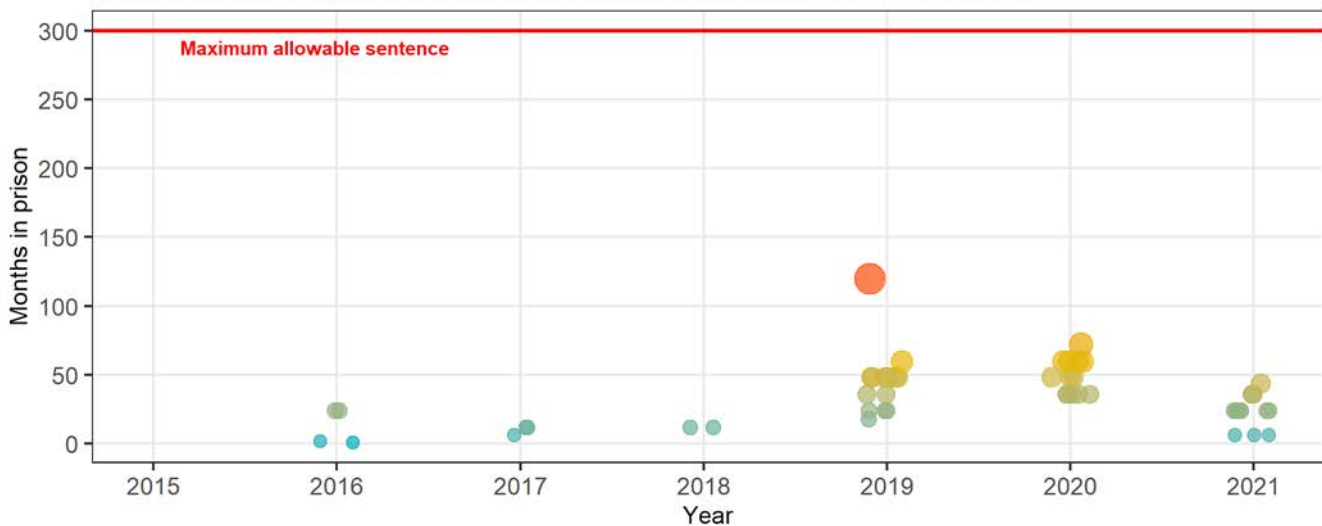
Charges were laid under Section 4 (1)(a) and (1)(b) of the Controlled Wildlife Products and Trade Act 9 of 2008, as amended Act 6 of 2017. The red line indicates the maximum allowable fine as per the Act.



13.11 MAXIMUM versus ACTUAL PRISON TERMS (elephant trafficking)

Annual distribution of imprisonment (months) issued for illegal possession and dealing of elephant products

Charges were laid under Section 4 (1)(a) and (1)(b) under the Controlled Wildlife Products and Trade Act 9 of 2008, as amended Act 6 of 2017. The red line indicates the maximum allowable imprisonment as per the Act.



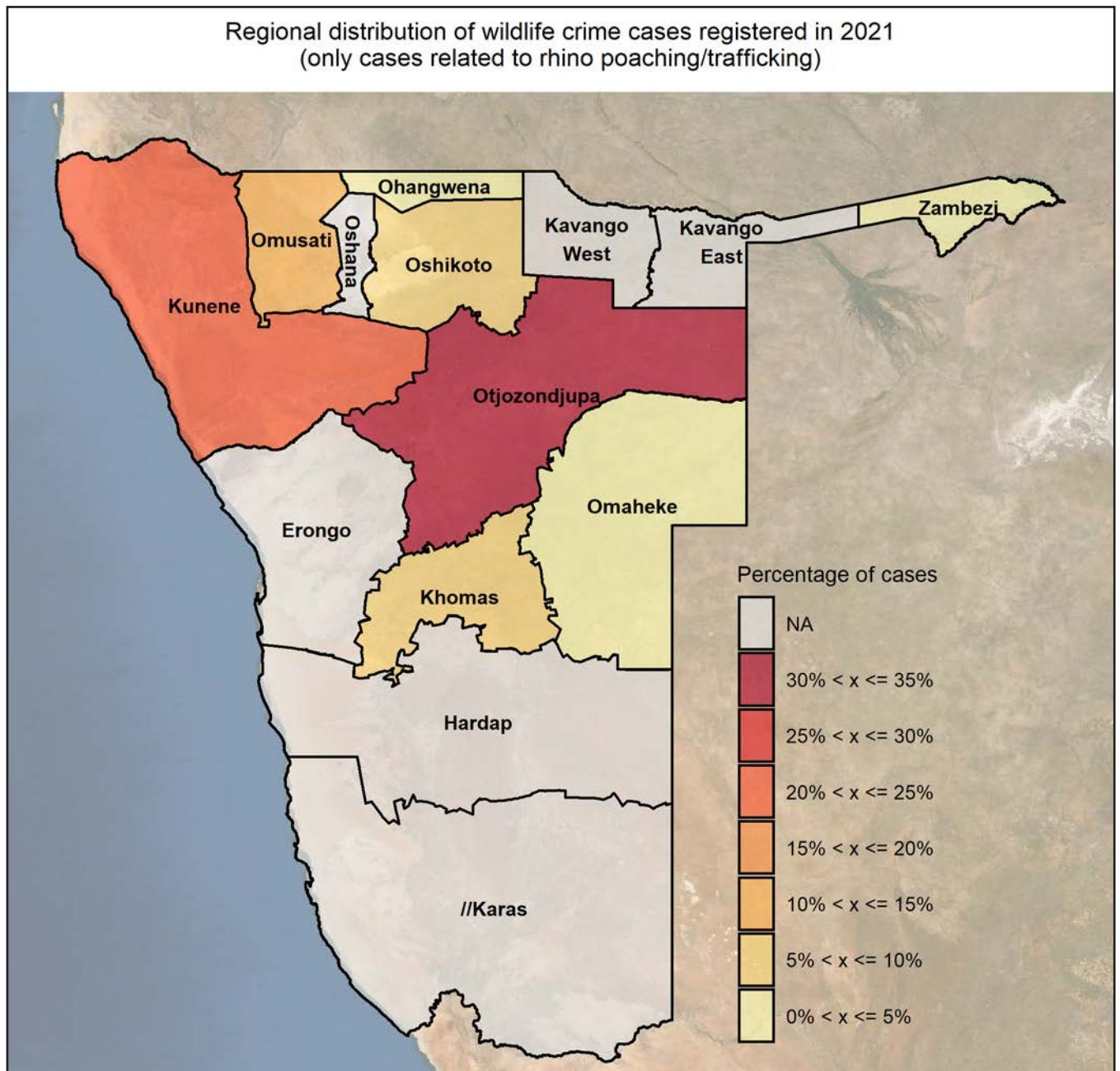
Maximum versus actual sentences related to elephant trafficking

- Namibian laws stipulate maximum penalties for all defined transgressions; the graphs show the gap between maximum sentences as stipulated in the relevant legislation and actual sentences handed down by the courts; penalties may consist of a fine, a prison term, or both.
- Elephant crimes prosecuted in Namibia consist mostly of ivory trafficking; much of the ivory is smuggled into Namibia from neighbouring countries for attempted sale; the origin of the ivory can rarely be ascertained.
- Most perpetrators of ivory trafficking arrested in Namibia are rural community members with extremely limited financial means; high fines in these cases are meaningless, as the perpetrators are generally unable to pay even a relatively modest fine.
- While prison terms of as high as 10 years have been served, most sentences in recent years have been much lower; all sentences in 2021 have been below 4 years.



14. RHINO POACHING AND TRAFFICKING TRENDS 2015–2021

14.1 REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION of REGISTERED CASES related to RHINO during 2021:



Regional distribution of rhino cases

- The largest rhino populations occur in Namibia's national parks, yet rhinos occur in smaller populations in many parts of the country.
- The map indicates registered cases of rhino crimes, which may consist of rhino poaching, horn trafficking or a variety of other offenses related to rhinos; the map does not reflect rhino distribution, nor necessarily where crimes occurred.
- The Otjozondjupa Region is clearly a hotspot for rhino trafficking in Namibia; this may be due to a number of factors, including proximity to rhino ranges and important trafficking nodes for rhino products.
- No rhinos occur in the Zambezi or Ohangwena regions; horns trafficked here originate from outside the region.

After having been locally extinct for well over a century, Namibia's white rhino population was reestablished by translocating animals from South Africa. The animals are distributed across different parts of the country, often in small sub-populations that remain extremely susceptible to poaching.

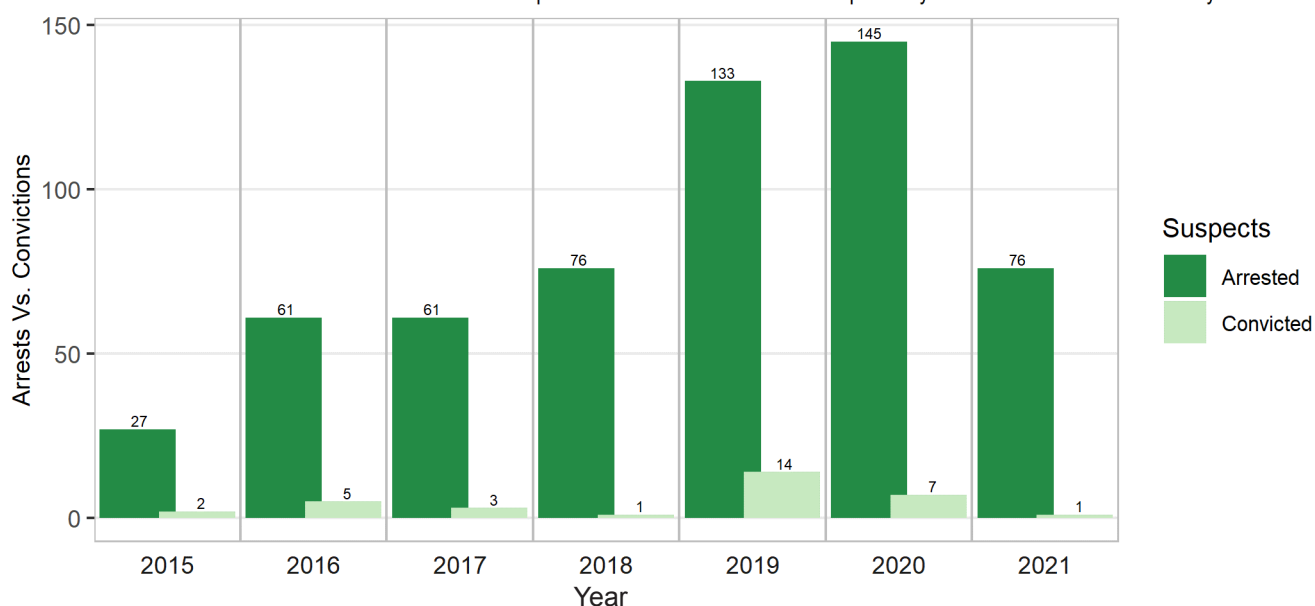
White rhino in a private nature reserve, central Namibia.



14.2 ARRESTS versus CONVICTIONS (rhinos)

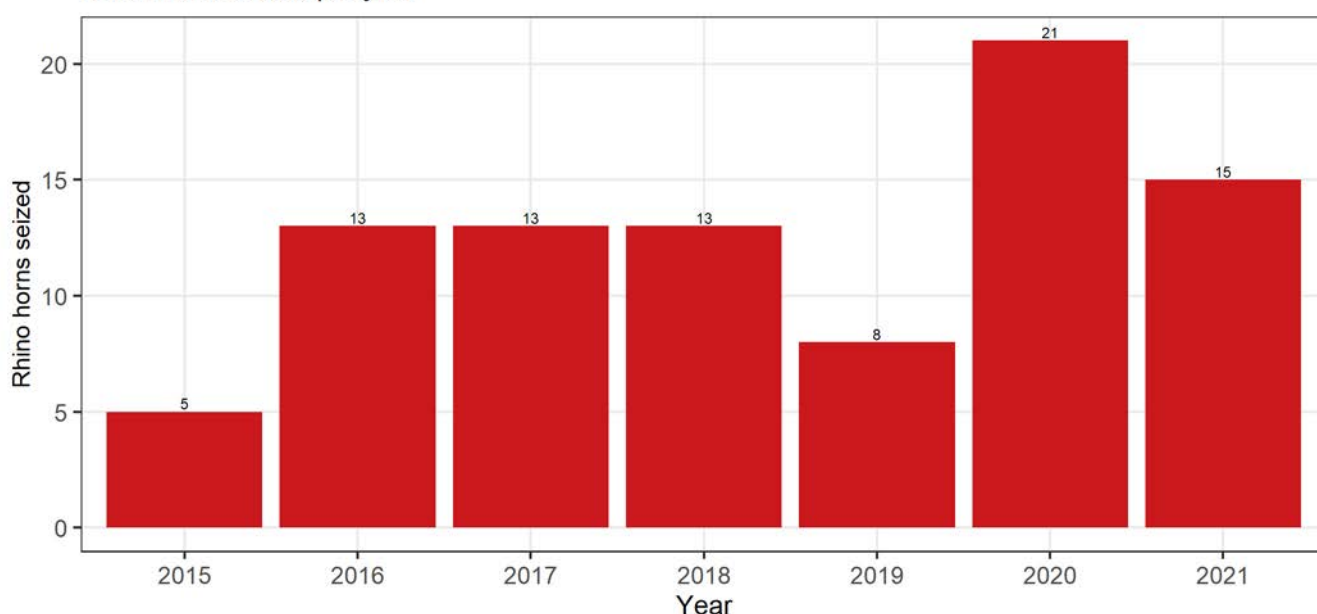
Annual arrests vs. their current conviction status (rhino cases only)

The bars "Convicted" indicate the number of suspects who were arrested in the respective year and have been convicted by now.



14.3 SEIZURES (rhinos)

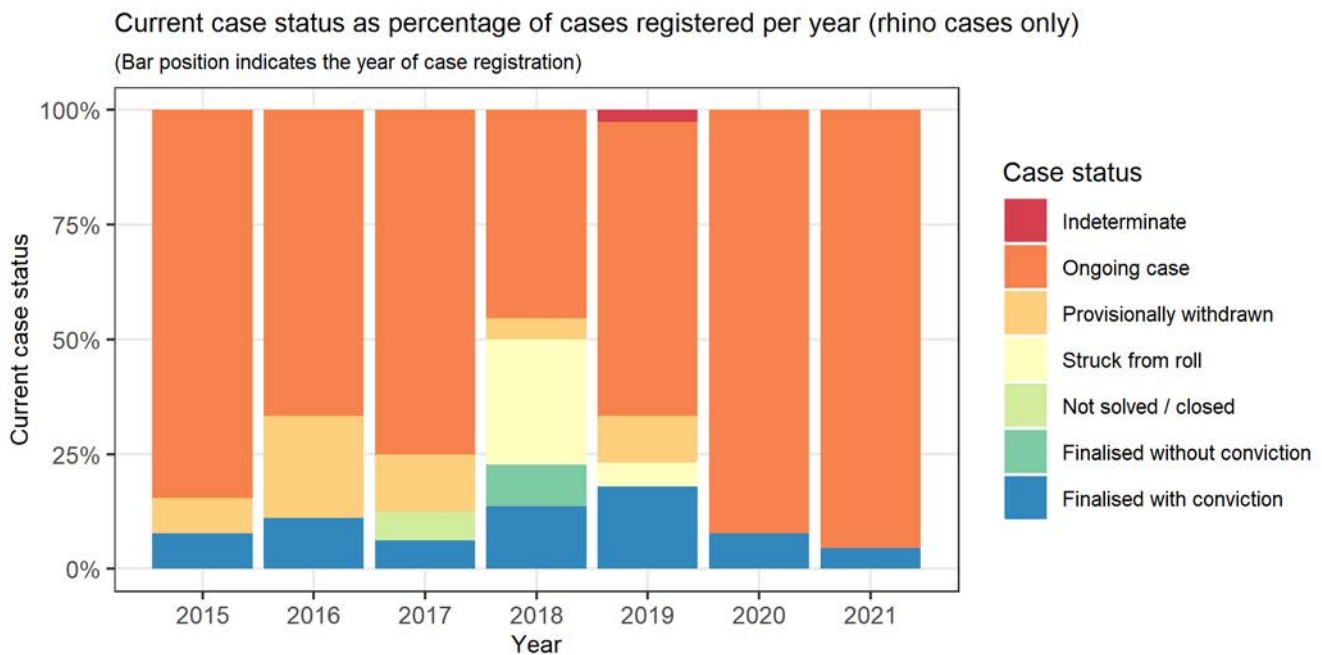
Rhino horns seized per year



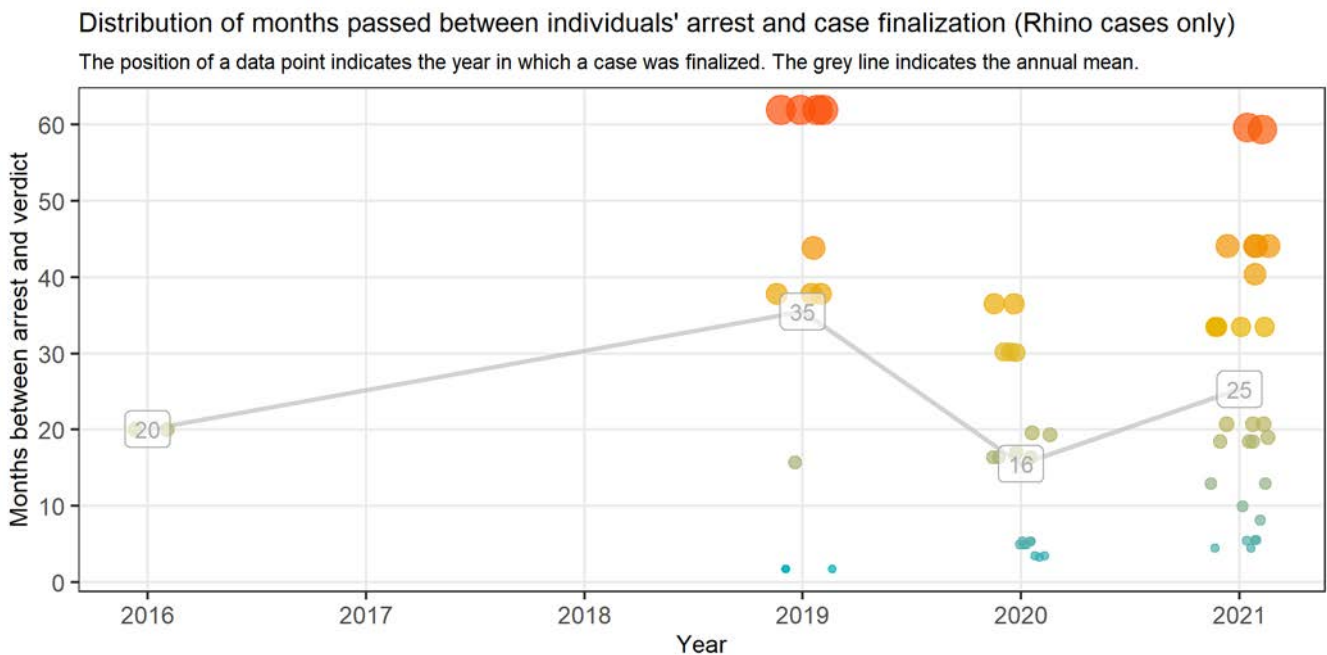
Arrests, convictions and seizures related to rhinos

- **Annual arrests vs. current conviction status** (as at end December 2021) indicates the challenges in achieving convictions in rhino cases; of 579 suspects arrested since the start of 2015, only 33 had been convicted at the end of 2021; the causes for this are complex – all rhino cases require PG guidance prior to prosecution, which lengthens the duration of the cases; pre-emptive arrests, as well as the arrests of aiders and abettors, are based largely on circumstantial evidence, making convictions more difficult; businessmen and prominent members of society who have been arrested for rhino-horn trafficking are able to secure excellent legal representation that is able to block rapid convictions; linkages between rhino carcasses, used firearms and confiscated horns require forensic evidence, which takes time to secure; other factors also play a role.
- **Seizures of rhino horns** have increased over the past two years, while poaching incidents have decreased; this is caused partly by the disruption of rhino syndicates and the arrest of kingpins responsible for smuggling rhino horns out of the country, which has forced poachers to attempt to sell horns in Namibia, leading to their arrest.

14.4 CURRENT CASE STATUS (rhinos)



14.5 TIME BETWEEN ARREST and CASE FINALISATION (rhinos)

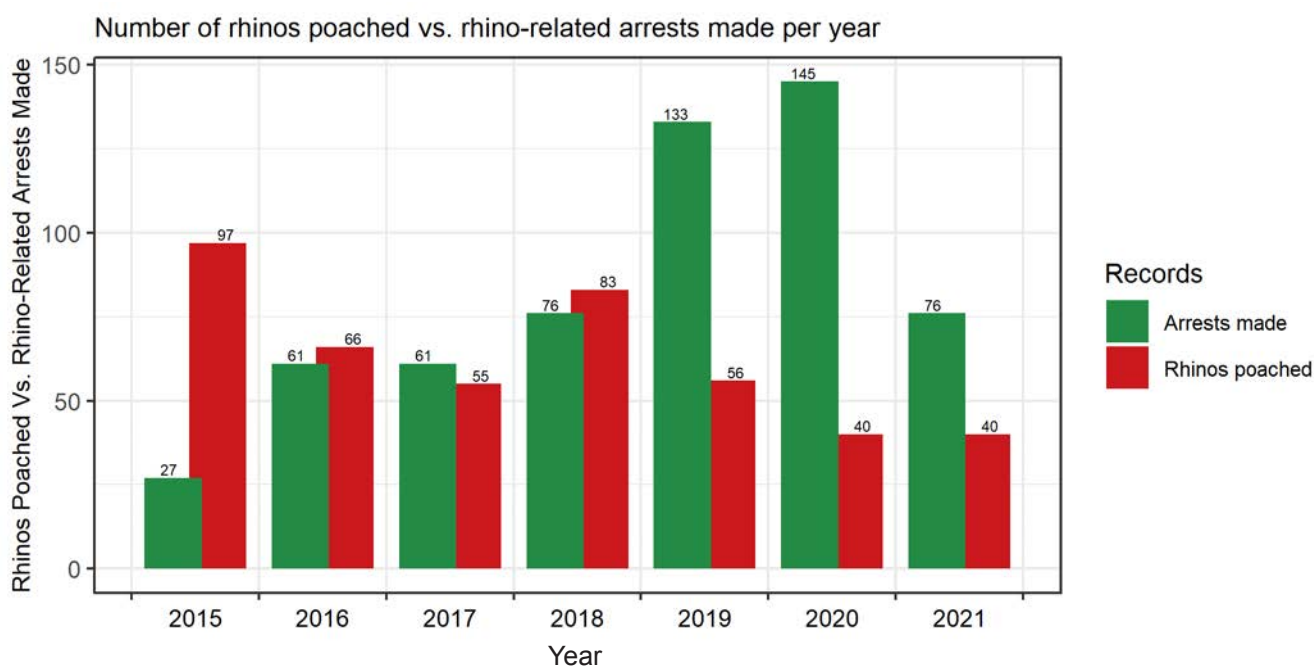


Current case status and time between arrest and case finalisation in rhino cases

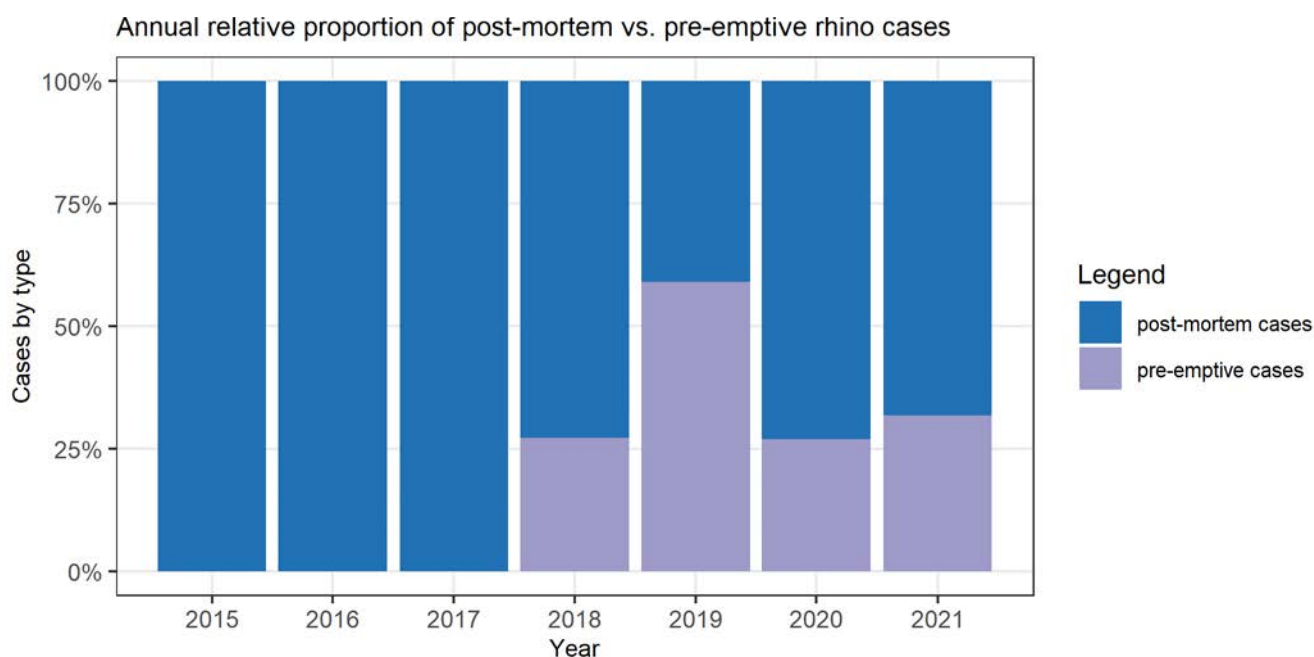
- **Current case status** (as at end December 2021) is stagnant in rhino cases, with low rates of finalisation and conviction; less than 20% of cases registered in any year have been finalised with convictions; some cases have been withdrawn, struck from the roll or finalised without conviction; well over 50% of cases registered in any particular year remain ongoing (see notes opposite for details on causes); indeterminate indicates a current status that has not yet been defined in the database.
- **Time between arrest and conviction** shows the complexity of rhino crimes and the drawn-out nature of these cases; the cases finalised in 2019 that took over 5 years to be completed represent the drawn-out case of four Chinese co-conspirators who attempted to smuggle 14 rhino horns out of the country in 2014, which included a lengthy appeal against the original sentence handed down in 2016.



14.6 Comparison of POACHING ESTIMATES versus ARRESTS (rhinos)



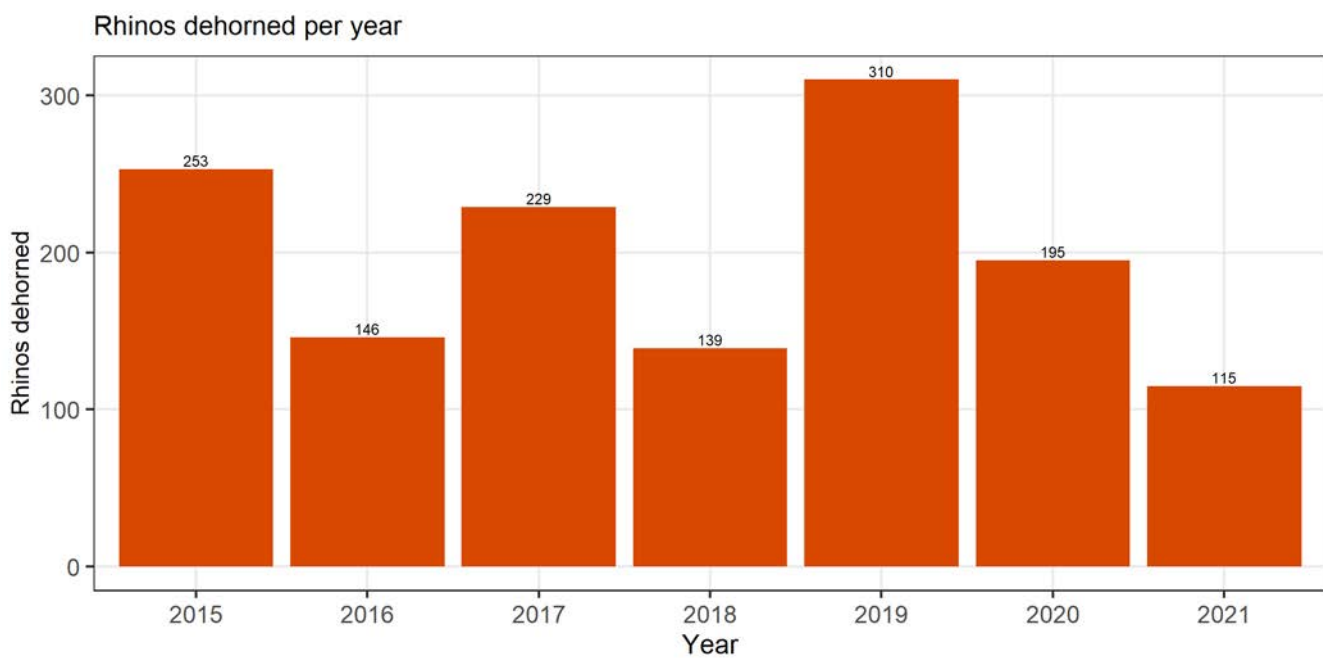
14.7 PERCENTAGE of PRE-EMPTIVE CASES (rhinos)



Proactive law enforcement and anti-poaching interventions related to rhinos

- **Poaching estimates vs. arrests** clearly show that while poaching incidents have been curbed, arrests have increased significantly; not just the poachers, but a substantial number of dealers, aiders and abettors are being arrested and prosecuted; arrests in older cases, some reaching back several years, also continue to be made as investigations into cases continue.
- **Percentage of pre-emptive rhino cases** is a good indicator of the success of effective law enforcement; pre-emptive arrests are based on intelligence-led investigations that apprehend poaching gangs while they are conspiring to poach, but before they are able to kill a rhino; this saves the lives of numerous rhinos while still catching the would-be poachers.
- **Dehorning of rhinos** is used to make the animals uninteresting to poachers by shifting the risk-reward ratio in favour of law enforcement (the risk of arrest becomes much higher than the small reward of a rhino horn stub); dehorning must be repeated at regular intervals as the horns grow back (similar to human fingernails); dehorning is extremely expensive, requiring expert teams and usually the use of helicopters and spotter aircraft; rhinos in high risk areas are thus prioritised for dehorning.

14.8 DEHORNING of RHINOS



The unique challenge of protecting Namibia's rhinos

The utter decimation of global rhino populations over the past two centuries is one of the most tragic stories of human abuse of natural resources. African rhinos have experienced waves of slaughter, followed by periods of limited regrowth, and then further slaughter. Black rhinos, still numbering over 100,000 in 1960, have been reduced to less than 6,000 across Africa today. The southern white rhino was saved from the very brink of extinction, after less than 50 were left in South Africa around 1900. Through concerted efforts and regional reintroductions, the overall population has been rebuilt to around 20,000 today¹⁹.

The story of Namibia's rhinos follows a similar trajectory. Indiscriminate killing by early European explorers eliminated all white rhinos from the area that is today Namibia around 1850. Black rhinos survived only in remote pockets. Over the past half-century, Namibia has been successful at rebuilding both populations to relatively healthy numbers. Black rhino numbers have increased to the extent that the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), changed the status category of the Namibian population (subspecies *Diceros bicornis bicornis*) from Vulnerable to Near Threatened in 2020, meaning the animals are at a lower risk of extinction. The white rhino is also categorised as Near Threatened, as the South African population remains healthy. Yet the small and disjointed Namibian white rhino population is still very susceptible to the impacts of poaching since being rebuilt

from ground zero. Having the same species go locally extinct twice would be a compounded tragedy.

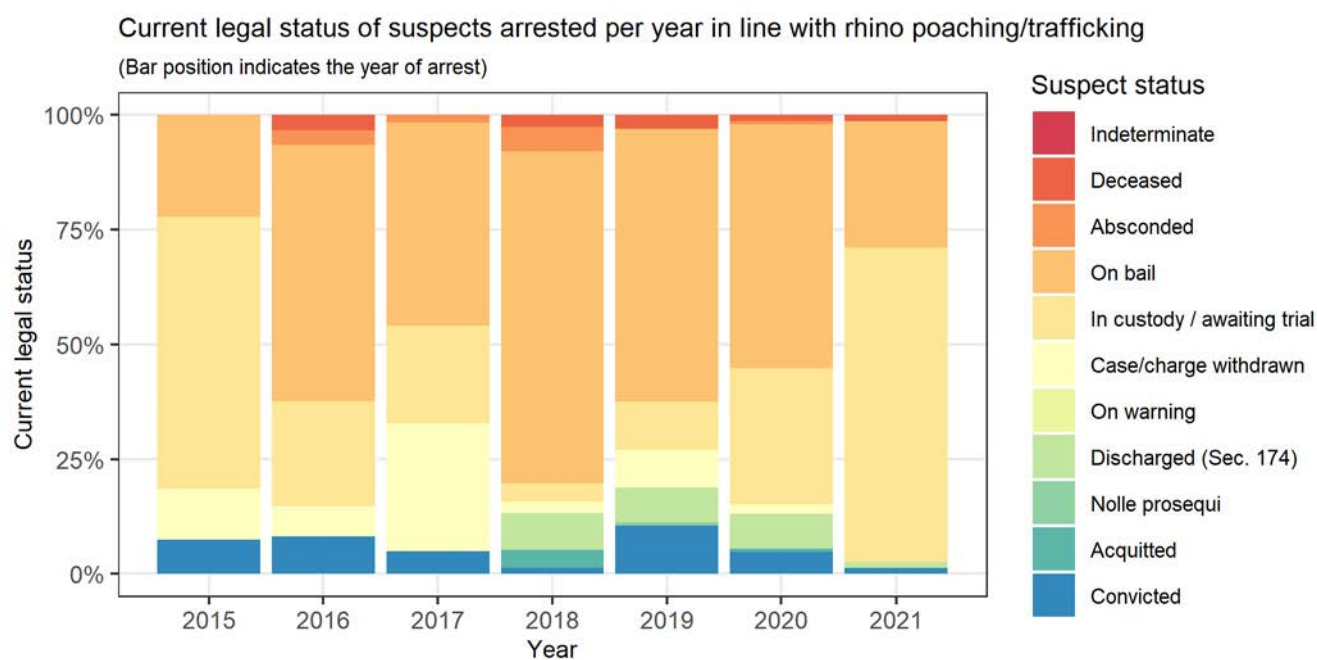
Namibia has implemented a range of measures to protect its rhinos. When poaching losses escalated to alarming levels, national security forces were deployed in an anti-poaching capacity in priority parks in 2016. Dedicated rhino rangers monitor the free-roaming population in the northwest. Private anti-poaching units protect rhino populations on freehold land. Particularly vulnerable animals are dehorned to make them uninteresting to poachers (the horns grow back and dehorning needs to be repeated at regular intervals).

Yet the immense costs of rhino protection are a national burden. The resources spent on rhino translocation, anti-poaching activities, dehorning operations, law enforcement and other initiatives could be used to address the country's urgent human development needs. On freehold land, the high costs of rhino protection are undermining the ability of nature reserves to keep rhinos on their property²⁰.

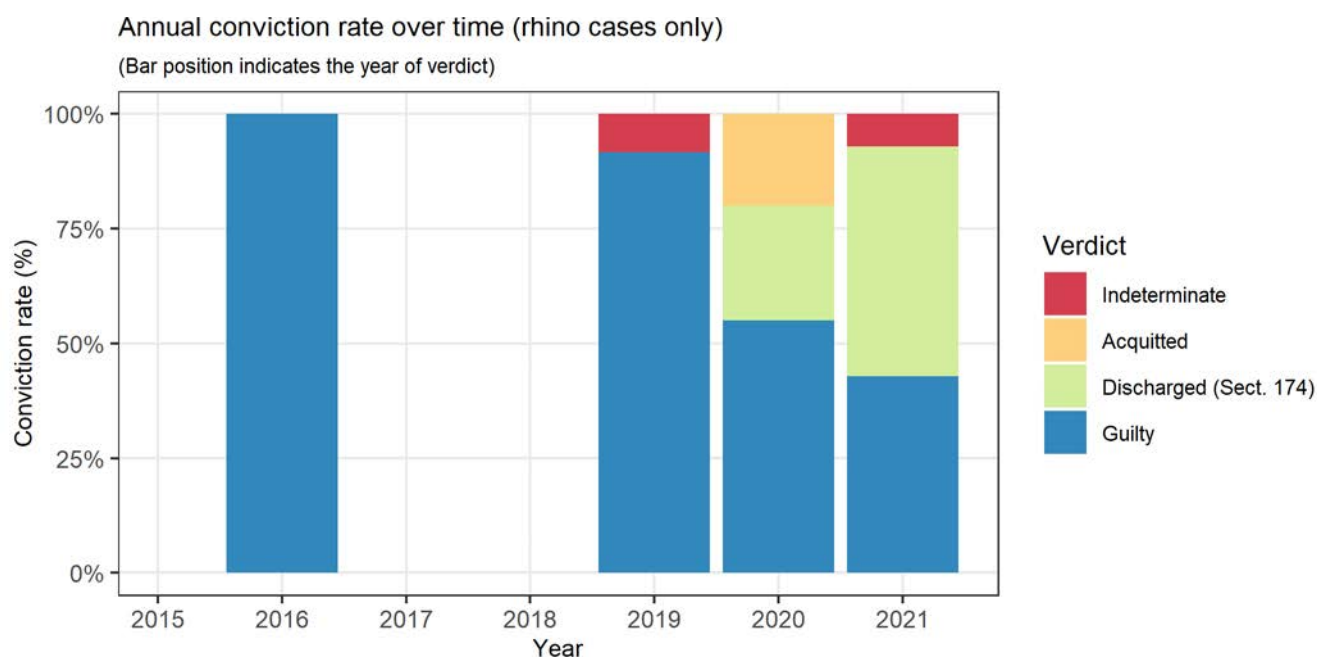
Despite Namibia's best efforts to protect the country's rhinos and counter poaching, the demand for horn is driven by international end markets over which Namibia has no control. Scenarios in other rhino range states have shown that poaching may continue until populations are wiped out. Namibia must be prepared for a long battle, with the ultimate aim of eliminating the demand for rhino horn through international interventions.



14.9 CURRENT LEGAL STATUS of SUSPECTS (rhinos)



14.10 ANNUAL CONVICTION RATE (rhinos)



Current legal status of suspects and annual conviction rate in rhino cases

- Current legal status of suspects** (as at end December 2021) in rhino cases is alarming; of all suspects arrested in any year, less than 10% had been convicted at the end of 2021; of suspects arrested in 2015, 60% were still in custody and another 20% on bail awaiting trial, 10% had had their case withdrawn; a small percentage of suspects has been acquitted, discharged, no longer prosecuted (nolle prosequi), absconded, died, or the case against them has been withdrawn; causes for the challenges in prosecuting rhino crimes are discussed in the notes on p.56; indeterminate indicates a current status that has not yet been defined in the database.
- Annual conviction rate** refers to the percentage of suspects in finalised cases who have been convicted; this has varied considerably in rhino cases, with a 100% rate in 2016, but less than 50% in 2021, when 50% of suspects were discharged; no convictions were achieved in 2015, 2017 and 2018 (the convicted status for suspects indicated for these years in the 'Current legal status of suspects' graph was achieved in subsequent years); it must be emphasised that few rhino cases have been finalised (see 'Current case status' graph, p. 57) and the resultant small dataset can create skewed perceptions.

The unique challenge of countering rhino poaching and trafficking in Namibia

Asian demand for rhino horn has exploded in recent decades, fuelling a renewed rhino-poaching crisis across Africa. Vietnam and China currently make up roughly 80 per cent of the known rhino horn destination markets²¹. Over the past decade, rhino horn has been touted by the international media as one of the most valuable natural products, more expensive by weight even than cocaine²². Recent market research in Asia has recorded lower prices, indicating that the price being paid for rhino horn per kilogram is less than that for gold²³. Nevertheless rhino horn is still valuable enough to enable intricate supply chains and encourage the slaughter of countless rhino. Global numbers have been reduced to such an extent that Namibia today supports the second-largest national rhino population after South Africa – a result of Namibia's long-term rhino conservation success.

Those hard-won conservation results continue to be eroded by wildlife crime. Since the start of 2015, an estimated 437 rhinos were poached in Namibia. Since 2018, intelligence-led investigations have resulted in an increasing number of arrests, while the number of annual poaching incidents has been curbed. Over the past three years 135 rhinos have been poached, while 354 suspects have been arrested. Arrests have included international kingpins trafficking Namibian rhino horns, high-level local kingpins and dealers, well-known personalities, members of the national security forces and local community members. Pre-emptive arrests have been particularly important in saving rhinos while still apprehending perpetrators. Entire poaching

gangs are being arrested, while transnational syndicates and trafficking webs are being disrupted.

Yet repeat offenders out on bail for previous wildlife crimes are regularly being arrested on new cases. Court cases are often very drawn out, as offenders are able to afford good legal representation. Guilty verdicts have not always resulted in appropriate sentences that deter further criminal activity. It is important that the judiciary responds to these challenges and that POCA charges and penalties are applied to counter organised wildlife crime (see also p. 21).

Despite the efforts of investigators, prosecutors and the courts, the drivers of rhino poaching and trafficking remain. Annual losses are still too high. Poaching can have a particularly severe impact on small, isolated populations, some of which have been wiped out completely in recent years. Namibia is a vast country and it is not possible to protect every single rhino everywhere, all of the time. It is thus vital that the combined efforts of effective conservation systems, active anti-poaching measures, stringent law enforcement and appropriate penalties continue to shift the risk-reward ratio in favour of rhinos. In the long term, poverty alleviation plays an important role in reducing the willingness of rural people to engage in crime.

The parameters for effective countermeasures to rhino crimes are in place. All relevant stakeholders – including local communities – must work together to ensure that they are successfully implemented.



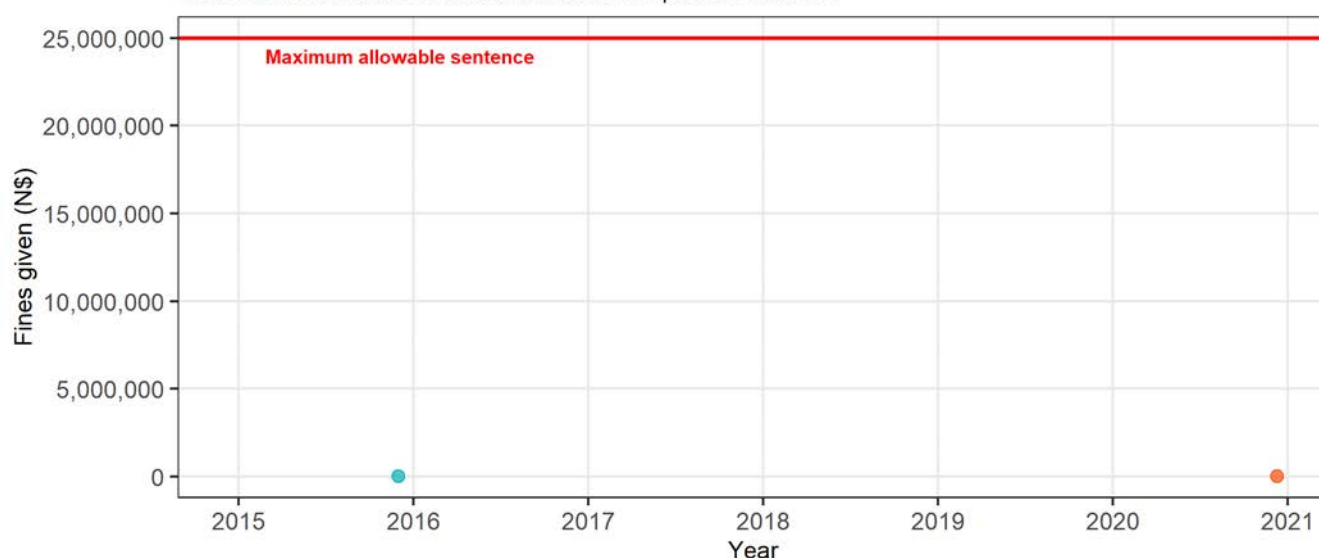
Seized rhino horn, wrapped in foil and hidden in a bag of flour, northern Namibia, June 2021



14.11 MAXIMUM versus ACTUAL FINES (rhino poaching)

Annual distribution of fines (N\$) issued for illegal hunting of rhino

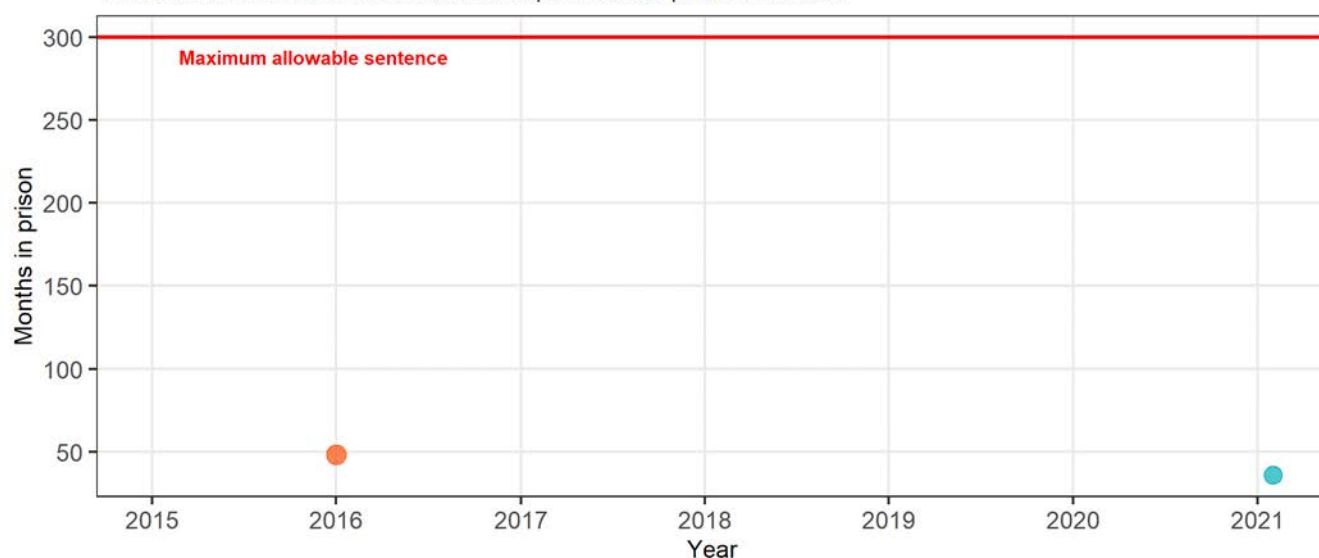
Charges were laid under Section 26 of the Nature Conservation Ordinance 4 of 1975, as amended Act 3 of 2017. The red line indicates the maximum allowable fine as per the Ordinance.



14.12 MAXIMUM versus ACTUAL PRISON TERMS (rhino poaching)

Annual distribution of imprisonment (months) issued for illegal hunting of rhino

Charges were laid under Section 26 of the Nature Conservation Ordinance 4 of 1975, as amended Act 3 of 2017. The red line indicates the maximum allowable imprisonment as per the Ordinance.



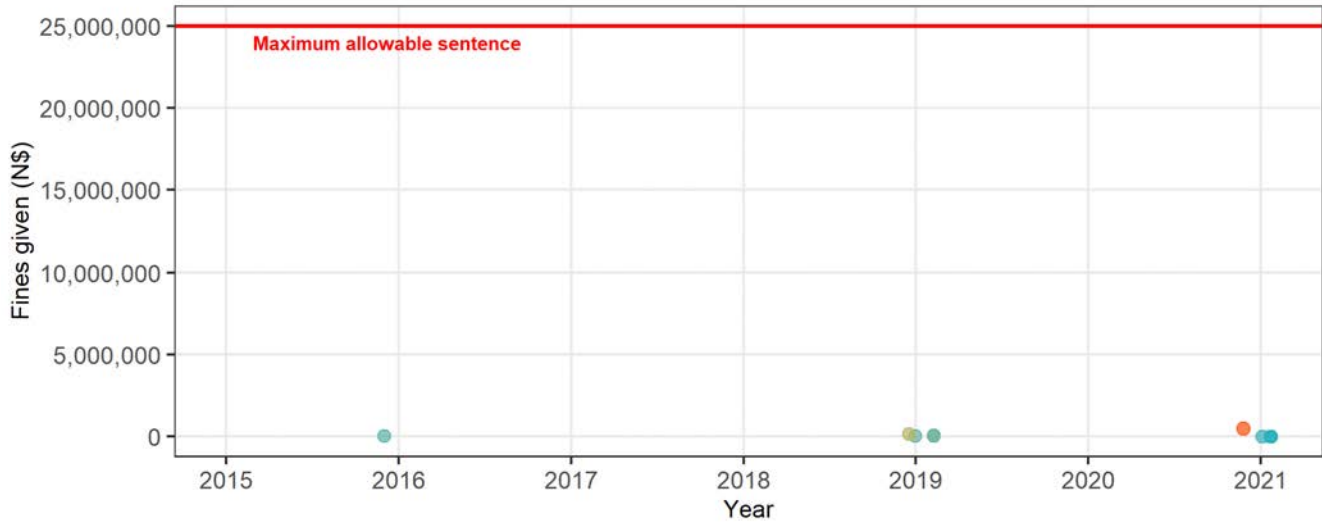
Maximum versus actual sentences related to rhino poaching

- Namibian laws stipulate maximum penalties for all defined transgressions; the graphs show the gap between maximum sentences as stipulated in the relevant legislation and actual sentences handed down by the courts; penalties may consist of a fine, a prison term, or both.
- Very few perpetrators have been convicted of rhino poaching in Namibia; causes for the challenges in prosecuting rhino crimes are discussed in the notes on p. 56.
- Rhino poachers are mostly part of poaching gangs that have links to more extensive criminal syndicates; the aiders and abettors regularly arrested as part of a poaching incident may be prosecuted for charges other than rhino poaching.
- Rhino poaching often leads to a range of transgressions, including illegal entry into a protected area, the use of illegal firearms, criminal gang activity, trafficking, racketeering and money laundering; additional charges and the related sentences are not reflected in the above graphs.
- The challenges of serving appropriate sentences for wildlife crimes are discussed in detail on p. 29.

14.13 MAXIMUM versus ACTUAL FINES (rhino trafficking)

Annual distribution of fines (N\$) issued for illegal possession and dealing of rhino products

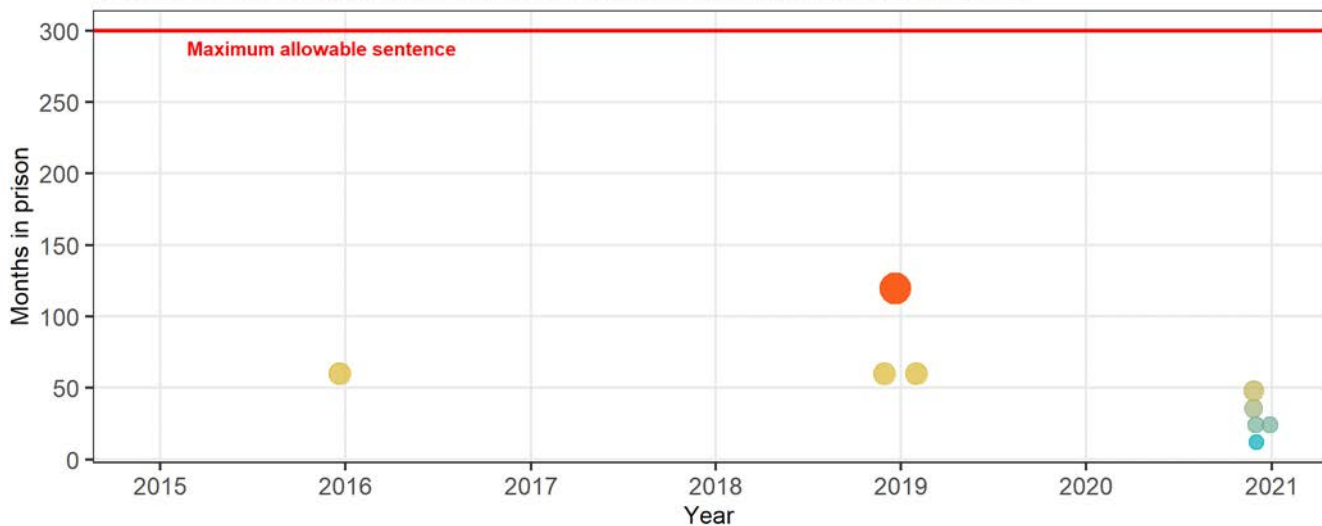
Charges were laid under Section 4 (1)(a) and (1)(b) of the Controlled Wildlife Products and Trade Act 9 of 2008, as amended Act 6 of 2017. The red line indicates the maximum allowable fine as per the Act.



14.14 MAXIMUM versus ACTUAL PRISON TERMS (rhino trafficking)

Annual distribution of imprisonment (months) issued for illegal possession and dealing of rhino products

Charges were laid under Section 4 (1)(a) and (1)(b) under the Controlled Wildlife Products and Trade Act 9 of 2008, as amended Act 6 of 2017. The red line indicates the maximum allowable imprisonment as per the Act.



Maximum versus actual sentences related to trafficking of rhino horns

- Namibian laws stipulate maximum penalties for all defined transgressions; the graphs show the gap between maximum sentences as stipulated in the relevant legislation and actual sentences handed down by the courts; penalties may consist of a fine, a prison term, or both.
- Very few perpetrators have been convicted of rhino trafficking in Namibia; causes for the challenges in prosecuting rhino crimes are discussed in the notes on p.56.
- The ten-year prison term handed down in 2019 is a significant sentence.
- Rhino crimes are complex and often include a range of charges other than illegal possession and dealing of rhino products; these charges and the related sentences are too diverse to portray here; the 20-year prison terms imposed on four Chinese in 2019 are reflected in the graph 9.13 Wildlife crime prison sentences (all categories) on p. 28.



Sound systems and approaches are vital for effective wildlife conservation and protection, for investigating and prosecuting criminal activity, and to ensure effective stakeholder collaboration. Yet only dedicated, motivated, well-trained and adequately resourced personnel can make those systems and approaches work.



Seizure of unlicensed ammunition.

15. SPECIAL FOCUS: NAMIBIAN PARTNERSHIPS AGAINST ENVIRONMENTAL CRIME

The growing complexity and increasing prevalence of organised poaching and trafficking have motivated Namibia to implement innovative systems and approaches to counter the manifold transgressions of wildlife crime. A holistic approach that embraces all aspects of wildlife conservation, protection and law enforcement is being pursued. Interagency collaboration is a vital facet of this. Cooperation is strengthened through formalised partnerships between key agencies, particularly those mandated with the conservation and protection of Namibia's natural resources.

THE FUNDAMENTAL PILLARS OF MODERN WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

Effective management of wildlife populations is now more important than ever, as organised wildlife crime exacerbates the global population declines of wildlife already heavily impacted by climate change, escalating habitat destruction, displacement and over-utilisation. Effective wildlife management is complex and relies on four fundamental pillars to be successful: conservation systems, wildlife protection, law enforcement and interagency collaboration.

Wildlife management in Namibia has constantly evolved to adapt to changing circumstances and to address arising issues, challenges and needs. Where conservation was once considered the sole mandate of the 'Department of Nature Conservation', modern wildlife management relies on a diverse range of stakeholders and requires innovative systems and approaches as well as concerted effort to be successful. The following interlinked areas form the foundation of effective wildlife management:

- **Wildlife conservation**
 - legislation that promotes conservation
 - wildlife management devolved to land-holders
 - benefits from wildlife-use directly to land-holders
 - conservation incentives for parks neighbours
 - conservation cover
 - state-protected areas
 - community conservation areas
 - freehold conservation areas
 - transboundary conservation initiatives
 - species management
 - monitoring
 - sustainable wildlife use
 - human-wildlife conflict mitigation
 - translocations & other population management

Wildlife conservation is the foundation on which all other pillars of wildlife management are built. If conservation systems are ineffective other initiatives become futile.

- **Wildlife protection**
 - legislation that protects wildlife
 - controlled access to protected areas
 - security infrastructure
 - anti-poaching patrols, dog units
 - community awareness & engagement
 - targeted interventions, e.g. dehorning of rhinos

Wildlife protection has become a central component of wildlife management as more and more species are targeted by organised crime.

- **Law enforcement**
 - surveillance
 - investigation
 - pre-emptive measures
 - case registration, arrests & seizures
 - prosecution
 - sentencing
 - appropriate penalties

Law enforcement is the frontline of countering organised wildlife crime.

- **Stakeholder collaboration**
 - The above can only be effectively implemented if clear overarching aims and strategies exists, all stakeholders collaborate and all contributions are promoted, welcomed and valued.



STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION

Government agencies, NGOs and private sector entities are prone to working in isolation from each other in a familiar ‘silo mentality’. This can be overcome through innovative systems and approaches and a culture of active collaboration. Formal interagency partnerships are effective at creating conducive parameters for cooperation, yet joint success ultimately depends on individual commitment to working together to achieve common goals.

On the one side, criminals have a distinct advantage, as they ignore laws, social norms, time schedules, park boundaries and international borders, while relying on an intricate web of enablers that connect illicit products to consumers, from the poacher to the buyer of wildlife products. On the other side, government staff operates according to rules, regulations and procedures, which can inhibit flexibility and rapid action. Non-government entities may have more flexibility, yet all activities must remain within national and international laws and boundaries. The criminal advantage can only be eliminated by countering perpetrators from all angles, i.e. ensuring strong conservation systems and active wildlife protection measures, exercising all applicable laws with input from all relevant agencies (where necessary through international collaboration), and ensuring effective prosecution and appropriate penalties – with all aspects being boosted by broad community support.

The degree of collaboration may vary, depending on circumstances and needs. Yet all partners need to be aware of the complexity and seriousness of wildlife crime – and

the importance of each individual contribution. While some contributions may seem inconsequential, all represent critical parts of the overall endeavour to minimise wildlife crime and must be recognised as such.

Such a holistic approach is in many instances only possible through external funding and technical assistance. To be effective, funding and technical support should be channelled via mandated government agencies directly to the personnel countering wildlife crime in the field on a day-to-day basis. To enable rapid responses to incidents of any nature, funding and technical support must be dispersed in real time and must be flexible to enable adaptability to evolving circumstances.

While agencies create important administrative and procedural parameters, it is the individuals carrying out the work who facilitate collaboration and efficient action. This requires cascading trust at all levels, from government leaders to NGO and funding agency directors and down to the field personnel who are on the frontline of countering wildlife crime.

The public is ultimately the most important stakeholder in the fight against wildlife crime. Some members of the public are driven to crime by a combination of circumstances, personal aspirations and motivations. Others feel morally bound to reject crime and to report criminal activity to the authorities. If community livelihoods are secure and personal aspirations can be met, and if people are proud of their natural heritage and feel a sense of ownership over wildlife and a sense of duty for its protection, then crime can be minimised and wildlife populations secured.

In a democracy, civil society plays a central role in wildlife conservation, protection and law enforcement by lobbying for appropriate development and opposing criminal behaviour.



CURRENT PARTNERS

Namibian Partnerships against Environmental Crime (N–PaEC) is a broad coalition between government agencies, NGOs, private sector, local communities, international funding agencies and the general public. Disregard for all laws gives criminals an edge, as conservation and law enforcement agencies need to adhere to rules and regulations. By working together and creating strong partnerships across a broad range of institutions and individuals, N–PaEC can significantly reduce the criminal edge.

Through N–PaEC, the ministries of Environment, Forestry and Tourism and Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security seek to engage all concerned stakeholders in the fight against wildlife crime. The below list is not exclusive and should be continually expanded to strengthen Namibia’s conservation and law enforcement efforts.

Government

- Anti-Corruption Commission
- Financial Intelligence Centre
- Ministry of Agriculture, Water & Land Reform
- Ministry of Defence
 - Namibian Defence Force
- Ministry of Environment, Forestry & Tourism
 - Directorate of Wildlife & National Parks
 - Wildlife Protection Services Division
 - Intelligence & Investigation Unit
 - Game Products Trust Fund
- Ministry of Finance
 - Directorate of Customs & Excise
- Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety & Security
 - Namibian Police Force
 - Directorate of Criminal Investigations
 - Protected Resources Division
 - Serious Crime Unit
- Ministry of Justice
- Office of the Attorney-General
 - Office of the Prosecutor General
 - Environmental Crimes Unit
 - Money-Laundering Unit
 - Asset Forfeiture Unit

Non-government organisations

- Integrated Rural Development & Nature Conservation
- Intelligence Support Against Poaching
- Legal Assistance Centre
- Namibia Animal Rehabilitation, Research & Education Centre
- Namibia Nature Foundation
- Rooikat Trust
- Save the Rhino Trust
- WWF In Namibia

NGO umbrella organisations

- Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organisations
- Namibian Chamber of Environment

International funding agencies

- Bureau of International Narcotics & Law Enforcement Affairs
- Global Environment Facility
- Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau
- United States Agency for International Development
- Wildcat Foundation
- WWF

Local communities

- Communal conservancies
 - Communal farmers
- Freehold conservancies
 - Freehold farmers
- Black-rhino custodians
- White-rhino owners

Private industry

- General business community
- Mining industry
- Tourism & conservation-hunting industries

The government welcomes all constructive stakeholder engagement. Support from Namibian companies and individuals is overwhelmingly positive and extremely wide-ranging. While it is impossible to mention all contributions here, each contribution is gratefully acknowledged.



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17. ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACC	<i>Anti-Corruption Commission</i>
AG	<i>Attorney-General</i>
BRTT	<i>Blue Rhino Task Team</i>
CCPCJ	<i>Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice</i>
CITES	<i>Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora</i>
CR	<i>Crime Register</i>
ECU	<i>Environmental Crimes Unit (Office of the Prosecutor General)</i>
FIC	<i>Financial Intelligence Centre</i>
GEF	<i>Global Environment Facility</i>
GPTF	<i>Game Products Trust Fund, MEFT</i>
ICWC	<i>International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime</i>
ID–WCN	<i>Integrated Database of Wildlife Crime in Namibia</i>
IIU	<i>Intelligence and Investigation Unit, MEFT</i>
INL	<i>Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, USA</i>
INTERPOL	<i>International Criminal Police Organization</i>
IRDNC	<i>Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation</i>
ISAP	<i>Intelligence Support Against Poaching</i>
KAZA	<i>Kavango–Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area</i>
KfW	<i>Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau</i>
LAC	<i>Legal Assistance Centre</i>
MAWLR	<i>Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform</i>
MEFT	<i>Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism</i>
MEFT–IIU	<i>MEFT Intelligence and Investigation Unit</i>
MHAISS	<i>Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security</i>
MoD	<i>Ministry of Defence</i>
MoF	<i>Ministry of Finance</i>
Moj	<i>Ministry of Justice</i>
NACSO	<i>Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organisations</i>
NAMPOL	<i>Namibian Police Force</i>
NAPHA	<i>Namibia Professional Hunting Association</i>
NARREC	<i>Namibia Animal Rehabilitation, Research and Education Centre</i>
NCE	<i>Namibian Chamber of Environment</i>
NDF	<i>Namibian Defence Force</i>
NGO	<i>Non-government organisation</i>
NNF	<i>Namibia Nature Foundation</i>
N–PaEC	<i>Namibian Partnerships against Environmental Crime</i>
PG	<i>Prosecutor General</i>
PG–ECU	<i>Prosecutor General’s Office Environmental Crimes Unit</i>
PRD	<i>Protected Resources Division, NAMPOL</i>
SRT	<i>Save the Rhino Trust</i>
UNODC	<i>United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime</i>
USAID	<i>United States Agency for International Development</i>
WCO	<i>World Customs Organisation</i>
WPSD	<i>Wildlife Protection Services Division, MEFT</i>



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