

SA won't allow rhino extinction says Molewa

The South African government will not allow the rhino to become extinct, the department of environmental affairs said on Sunday (22 September).



Edna Molewa (Image: GCIS)

"I can assure you that we will not allow rhinos to become extinct on our watch," Environmental Affairs Minister Edna Molewa said at a world rhino day parade in Pretoria.

The parade marked a sustained commitment by youth to the future of the country's environmental security and integrity.

In a memorandum, the youth asked the government to protect the rhino and said they were touched and concerned about the country's rhino and the effect poaching would have on the species' future.

"We, as the government, working with our partners in the justice and security cluster, [SA National Parks] and other private entities are working hard to meet the continuous challenges being presented in dealing with the poaching crisis," Molewa said.

She said the spate of rhino poaching had strengthened the government's determination to solve the problem. Among the latest developments was the establishment of a National Rhino Fund.

"Our rhino population may still be viable and stable, but it will require concerted effort and the involvement of all to end the on-going poaching of our rhinos."

She said 688 rhinos had been poached for their horn since the beginning of the year. In the past 10 days, 25 poachers had been arrested, 14 of them in Limpopo.

"Among those arrested was one of the most wanted poachers in the Kruger National Park," said department spokesman

Albi Modise.

"The number of arrests is an indication that additional safety and security measures, including the elevation of rhino crimes to the national joint operations centre, and the improvement of skills of rangers, investigators and prosecutors, are successful," he said.

Source: Sapa via I-Net Bridge

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