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Kenya Announces Death Penalty for Poachers

By bestfolkmedicine · 24/05/2019 · 2 min read



Did you know that Kenya is the home to a variety of numerous iconic animas, including elephants, giraffes, leopards, rhinoceros, and cheetahs? Unfortunately, rhinos and elephants are the main target of illegal poachers because of their tusks and horns.

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The poachers hunt them and then remove these parts to sell them. Despite being illegal to kill Kenya's endangered species, poaching has not ceased. According to a Wildlife Conservation Act from 2013, there was a life in prison sentence or a $200,000 fine for offenders.

Despite this act, curb poaching did not reduce, says Najib Balala, cabinet secretary in the Ministry of Tourism. So, there have been harsher measures announced, i.e. Kenyan poachers will face death penalty.

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Death Sentence for Poachers in Kenya Is Put into Motion?

Many hope that this strict measure will help save the endangered species. Poaching in Kenya has been reducing thanks to bigger attention to conservation and law enforcement. In comparison to 2012 and 2013, rhino poaching has dropped by 85 percent and the elephant poaching by 78 percent. However, the animals are still in danger.

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Namely, there are less than 1,000 black rhinos there while the population of elephants is somewhere around 34,000. In 2017, 9 rhinos and 69 elephants were killed, which is sufficient to cancel out the population's growth, according to the Save the Rhino organization.

Why Are Elephants and Rhinos Poached?

Elephants are a major target of poachers because of their ivory tusks which are carved into figurines, utensils, jewelry, etc. The AWF emphasize that up to 70 percent of the illegal ivory goes into China to be sold for up to $1,000 per one pound.

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China has had a ban on ivory from January 2018; however, there is still the black market. The horns of rhinos are also poached because of claimed abilities to help alleviate impotence, cancer, hangover, fever, and other medical problems.

But, this is not the case in reality as they are mostly keratin, the same thing our fingernails are made of. However, they continue being sold for high prices, up to $30,000 per one pound which is, believe it or not, more expensive than gold which costs around $22,000 per pound.

Unfortunately, the AWF claim that with the current poaching rates, iconic African wildlife may be gone in our lifetime. Living without rhinos and elephants is a major loss as both species are significant for the environment.

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For example, elephants disperse seed in their feces when travelling long distance while rhinos graze on large amounts of grass and help maintain it short and improve the food access for zebras and impalas.

Hope we will never have to witness a world without these unique animals.

Sources:

GREEN WORLD WARRIORS

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