

Two held for illegally trading reptiles

Two German nationals are expected to appear in court on Monday for the alleged illegal trade and possession of reptiles and controlled substances.



Image source: Ludvig Hedenborg from [Pexels](#)

“The men were nabbed while illegally catching and trading in reptiles, including Armadillo Girdled lizards which are a threatened and protected species, geckos and tortoises in the Northern Cape with the intention to smuggle them out of South Africa into the lucrative international exotic pet trade,” the department said on Sunday.

All South African tortoises and some of the lizards are listed by the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), which regulates the international trade in these species. Dagga and other drugs were also confiscated during the arrest.

The men were arrested on Friday near Askam in the Northern Cape as a result of a multi-agency reptile undercover operation.

The operation comprised of the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment's Green Scorpions and the Hawks, assisted by the Environmental Enforcement Fusion Centre, the police, South African National Parks (SANParks) environmental crime inspectors, the Northern Cape Department of environmental affairs and the private sector.

"The collaboration by all members of the multi-disciplinary team is to be commended. Without the dedication of the Green Scorpions, members of the security establishment, provincial officials and the private sector, we will not be able to win the war against wildlife crime," the department said.

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