



**EAGLE**

April 2019  
EAGLE Network

# Wildlife Law Enforcement Briefing

- ✓ *17 traffickers arrested in 5 countries*
- ✓ *A Cameroonian ivory trafficker holding a falsified ID arrested with 16 tusks in Gabon*
- ✓ *3 ivory traffickers arrested with 5 tusks of very young elephants in Cameroon*
- ✓ *4 big cats skin traffickers arrested in three operations in Senegal, with lion head skins and leopard skins*
- ✓ *3 more ivory traffickers and 2 leopard skin traffickers arrested in Gabon*
- ✓ *3 traffickers arrested with 3 tusks in Benin*
- ✓ *An ivory trafficker arrested with 3 tusks in Congo*



*A Cameroonian ivory trafficker holding a falsified ID arrested with 16 tusks in Gabon*



*3 ivory traffickers arrested with 5 tusks of very young elephants in Cameroon*

# Summary

17 traffickers were arrested in 5 countries.

An ivory trafficker of Cameroonian origin was arrested in Gabon with 16 tusks, weighing 78.6 kg. He was monitored by the operation team while transporting the contraband concealed in several cardboard boxes to the transaction place, where he was arrested in the act. He was also using a fake ID card with Gabonese identity, to cover his criminal activities.

3 ivory traffickers arrested with 5 tusks of very young elephants and an elephant tail in Cameroon. The first two traffickers were arrested in the act with the contraband concealed in a red backpack. They quickly denounced the third trafficker, who was nearby ready to collect his share of the money. He killed the baby elephants with a gun, belonging to his father, retired policeman. The tusks of the baby elephants, who were massacred just a few days before the transaction in Dja Biosphere reserve, were only 15 cm long and weighed less than a kilogram altogether. The traffickers used a canoe to cross a river into the Dja reserve and travelled through very difficult parts of the forest to avoid being spotted by ecoguards. They activated a chain of several small traffickers and poachers around the reserve. They also trafficked in pangolin scales. They were well known in their community for their lavish lifestyles. After the arrest a member of their family, who is a bailiff, attempted to intervene in the process, but his attempts were blocked.

4 big cats skin traffickers arrested in three operations in Senegal. One trafficker was arrested in Dakar with 3 lion heads skins and other contraband, including lion bones, vulture heads, oryx horns and other contraband, concealed in rice bags. 3 leopard skin traffickers arrested in a double-operation clamping down on two different trafficking groups. Two traffickers were arrested with 2 leopard skins and 3 skins of harnessed bushbuck, species fully protected in Senegal. They were arrested in their home in the attempt to sell the skins, concealed in a bag. The third one was arrested with one leopard skin, which he attempted to sell in a market. He carried the skin concealed in a millet bag.

2 leopard skin traffickers were arrested with two skins in Gabon. The first one was arrested in the capital city with the skins concealed in a backpack during the attempt to sell them. He denounced the other

trafficker, who was arrested soon after in Oyem, a town 400 km away.

An ivory trafficker was arrested in Gabon city with 4 tusks. He was arrested during an attempt to sell the ivory. 2 ivory traffickers were arrested with 6 tusks in the West of the country.

3 traffickers were arrested with 3 tusks in Benin. The first one was arrested in the act during an attempt to sell the tusks in a restaurant. Two other traffickers were waiting for the result of the transaction in front of the restaurant with the motorbike used for transporting the tusks. When police approached them, one of them escaped but the Coordinator himself together with police forces chased him and led the team to find him hiding in a room of an old woman nearby.

An ivory trafficker was arrested in Congo with 3 tusks. He is a notorious and well-connected trafficker who has been trading ivory regularly across the country. He brought the tusks concealed in his backpack from a small town in the area near the Gabonese border to avoid detection.



*One trafficker arrested in Dakar with 3 lion heads skins and other contraband.*

# Cameroon – LAGA

- 3 ivory traffickers arrested with 5 tusks of very young elephants and an elephant tail. The first two traffickers were arrested in the act with the contraband concealed in a red backpack. They quickly denounced the third trafficker, who was nearby ready to collect his share of the money. He killed the baby elephants with a gun, belonging to his father, retired policeman. The tusks of the baby elephants, who were massacred just a few days before the transaction in Dja Biosphere reserve, were only 15 cm long and weighed less than a kilogram altogether. The traffickers used a canoe to cross a river into the Dja reserve and travelled through very difficult parts of the forest to avoid being spotted by ecoguards. They activated a chain of several small traffickers and poachers around the reserve. They also trafficked in pangolin scales. They were well known in their community for their lavish lifestyles. After the arrest a member of their family, who is a bailiff, attempted to intervene in the process, but his attempts were blocked.
- The Heads of the Legal and Investigation Departments held a meeting with a pangolin conservationist and the Centre Regional Delegate of Forestry and Wildlife to map out ways to rescuing and rehabilitating pangolins.
- A legal adviser successfully completed her course at the Durrell Endangered Species Management Program at the Durrell Conservation Academy in



New Jersey, UK.

- The Interim Director and the Accountant travelled to Gabon to be trained on a new accounting system for EU funding.



## Congo – PALF

- An ivory trafficker arrested in the capital city with 3 tusks. He is a notorious and well-connected trafficker who has been trading ivory regularly across the country. He brought the tusks concealed in his backpack from a small town in the area near the Gabonese border to avoid detection.
- The Coordinator held a series of meetings with several high authorities including the General Director of Forest Economy, the Advisers and Attachés of US Embassy, several State Counsels and Department Directors of Water and Forest and others.
- The Coordinator and the Assistant Coordinator travelled to Gabon to be trained on a new accounting system for EU funding.
- One legal advisor continued his test period.



## Gabon – AALF

- An ivory trafficker of Cameroonian origin arrested with 16 tusks, weighing 78.6 kg. He was monitored by the operation team while transporting the contraband concealed in several cardboard boxes to the transaction place, where he was arrested in the act. He was also using a fake ID card with Gabonese identity, to cover his criminal activities.
- 2 leopard skin traffickers arrested with two skins in Libreville. The first one was arrested in the capital city with the skins concealed in a backpack during the attempt to sell them. He denounced the other trafficker, who was arrested soon after in Oyem, a town 400 km away.
- An ivory trafficker arrested in the capital city with 4 tusks. He was arrested during an attempt to sell the ivory.

*An ivory trafficker of Cameroonian origin arrested with 16 tusks, weighing 78.6 kg.*



- 2 ivory traffickers arrested with 6 tusks in the West of the country.

- The Coordinator made a presentation at the National Assembly in front of 40 Members of Parliament and Senators on a guide of the judicial collaboration in Central Africa. The event was organized by the National Assembly with support of UNODC and ICCF group. He presented results of Conservation Justice in Gabon and EAGLE results in



*An ivory trafficker of Cameroonian origin arrested with 16 tusks, weighing 78.6 kg.*



*2 leopard skin traffickers arrested with two skins*

*2 ivory traffickers arrested with 6 tusks*

Africa, also explaining the need to increase the penalties in Gabon, where an important effort in the field and in justice is done, but the law on wildlife trafficking is very weak compared to other countries.

- The Coordinator met with the General Director of Wildlife and Protected Areas and with the General Secretary of the Minister to present activities of Conservation Justice.
- Two legal advisors trained police, gendarme and wildlife officers in collaboration with the Tribunal of Lambarene in methods of fighting wildlife crime.
- The second round of training on using a new accounting system for an EU project has been organized in Gabon by the Financial Officer for LAGA (Cameroon), PALF (Congo) and AALF (Gabon) accountants and managers, with 5 AALF team members participating as well.



*An ivory trafficker arrested in the capital city with 4 tusks.*

## Togo – EAGLE Togo

- Two Legal Advisers held a series of meetings with Deputies of State Counsels to handle them the Legal Kit and to discuss the ongoing cases.
- The Media Officer participated in two media conferences, one organized by the Ministry of Agriculture on the protection of the environment and the loss of species, the other organized by the Director of the Cabinet of Minister of Environment, Development and Protection of Nature on the risks for Togo if certain species become extinct.
- The recruitment process was intensified to strengthen the investigation department and improve the results of the project.

## Senegal – EAGLE Senegal

- A trafficker arrested in Dakar with 3 lion heads skins and other contraband, including lion bones, vulture heads, oryx horns and other contraband, concealed in rice bags.
- 3 leopard skin traffickers arrested in a double-operation clamping down on two different trafficking groups. Two traffickers were arrested with 2 leopard



3 leopard skin traffickers arrested in a double-operation

A trafficker arrested in Dakar with 3 lion heads skins and other contraband,

ard skins and 3 skins of harnessed bushbuck, species fully protected in Senegal. They were arrested in their home in the attempt to sell the skins, concealed in a bag.

- The third one was arrested with one leopard skin, which he attempted to sell in a market. He carried the skin concealed in a millet bag.
- The three ivory traffickers, arrested in March with 391 ivory pieces in March, were prosecuted and sentenced to 3 months in jail.
- The Coordinator participated in the presentation workshop of the five-year strategic plan of the Network of Parliamentarians for the Protection of the Environment in Senegal (REPES) at the National Assembly of Senegal.
- She also held a meeting with the Head of the Internal Security Service of the French Embassy in Senegal and an informal meeting with the Ambassadors of the United States of America, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands to strengthen the collaboration.
- The accountant continued the test period, a new legal advisor and a new investigator started their test period.



## Benin – AALF-B

- 3 traffickers arrested with 3 tusks. The first one was arrested in the act during an attempt to sell the tusks in a restaurant. Two other traffickers were waiting for the result of the transaction in front of the restaurant with the motorbike used for transporting the tusks. When police approached them, one of them escaped but the Coordinator himself together with police forces chased him and led the team to find him hiding in a room of an old woman nearby.
- The Coordinator held a series of meetings with government authorities, including the head of the General Directorate of the Water Resources and Hunting, with the DPJ commander regarding the follow-up of Salvador's bank req-

uisitions, several State Counsels and others.

- Two investigators continued their test period.



## Côte d'Ivoire – EAGLE Côte d'Ivoire

- The Coordinator held meetings with the representatives of US Embassy of Abidjan and Accra to introduce them the activities of the EAGLE Côte d'Ivoire and strengthen the cooperation.
- He also met with the representatives of NGO Akatia to discuss the plans for opening the chimpanzee sanctuary and with the UCT to intensify collaboration.
- The investigation on money laundering for the case of Vietnamese trafficker arrested in January 2018 has finished and next steps are taken to bring the case to the court.
- Gaspard Julien-laferrière, a supervolunteer, arrived to Côte d'Ivoire for mentoring and to support the management of the project.
- The legal department participated at an environmentally oriented career event organized by the International School Community of America.

## Burkina Faso - EAGLE Burkina Faso

- The investigations were interrupted due to the security situation in the country. The frequent strikes paralyzed the courts and no hearings were happening.
- The recruitment process was intensified to strengthen the Investigation and Legal Departments with for candidates starting their test period next month.

## Headquarters

- Ofir Drori, the Founding Director, participated at UNODC meeting in Vienna on the research methods of wildlife crime and the global report of wildlife trafficking. Lively discussions were held about examples from other crimes - drugs, human trafficking etc.
- The second round of training on using a new accounting system for an EU project has been organized in Gabon by the Financial Officer, participants included accountants and managers from LAGA (Cameroon), PALF (Congo) and AALF (Gabon).

## THE EAGLE Network

EAGLE: Eco Activists for Governance and Law Enforcement, is a network of members across Africa, who are replicating effectively a program and operational model to undertake wildlife law enforcement, which is based on the LAGA-Cameroon model, trailed, practiced and tested since 2003. The EAGLE Network currently operates in nine African countries and keeps expanding.

The over-arching objective of the EAGLE Network is: *Developing civic activism and collaborating with governments and civil society to improve the application of national and international environmental legislation, through a program of activities: investigations, arrests, prosecutions and publicity. Through this, EAGLE aims to generate a strong deterrent against the illegal*

*trade in wildlife, timber and related criminal activities, including corruption.*

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