



**EAGLE**

July 2019  
EAGLE Network

# Wildlife Law Enforcement Briefing

- ✓ *14 wildlife traffickers arrested in four countries*
- ✓ *3 traffickers arrested with 4 leopard skins in Cameroon*
- ✓ *3 traffickers arrested in two back to back operations in Senegal with a lion skin, a leopard skin and 24 crocodile skins*
- ✓ *A trafficker arrested with 12 skins of threatened sitatunga antelope and 45 skins of other protected species in Benin*
- ✓ *4 traffickers arrested with 20 crocodile skins in Burkina Faso*
- ✓ *3 ivory traffickers arrested in Burkina Faso with 2 tusks*



*3 traffickers were arrested with 4 leopard skins in Cameroon.*



*2 traffickers arrested in Senegal with 22 crocodile skins*

# Summary

14 wildlife traffickers were arrested in four countries.

3 traffickers were arrested with 4 leopard skins in Cameroon. They arrived to the place of transaction under heavy torrential rain and were arrested during an attempt to sell the skins. One of them attempted to escape when he realized that they were to be arrested but law officials moved swiftly and stopped him. They are regular suppliers of illicit leopard skins in an area that is notorious for leopard skins trafficking.

3 traffickers were arrested in two back to back operations in Senegal. A big cat skin trafficker arrested in the south of the country during an attempt to sell a lion skin, a leopard skin and two crocodile skins. He transported them concealed in a millet bag and a backpack. More contraband was found during the house search in his house including crocodile and python skins. 2 traffickers arrested the same day in the same town with 22 crocodile skins, concealed in the rice bag. They were arrested during an attempt to sell the skins in a restaurant. These two operations have helped to crack a new cross-border trafficking network operating in the south of the country between Senegal, Guinea Bissau, Guinea Conakry and the Gambia.



*A big cat skin trafficker arrested in Senegal during an attempt to sell a lion skin, a leopard skin and two crocodile skins.*

Sitatunga is a rare antelope, living in swamps and wetlands of West and central Africa. Its numbers are rapidly decreasing due to poaching and loss of its habitat.

4 traffickers were arrested with 20 crocodile skins in Burkina Faso, two of them security guards. Three were arrested in the act after they arrived with the contraband, well concealed in bags, to a hotel. They denounced another trafficker, who was arrested the same day. In the same country 3 ivory traffickers were arrested with two tusks in the attempt to sell them. Two of them brought the tusks from the border area of Ghana to the capital city to sell them, but were swiftly arrested instead. They denounced the third trafficker, who was arrested few days later.



*4 traffickers were arrested with 20 crocodile skins in Burkina Faso*

A trafficker was arrested with 12 skins of sitatunga, a fully protected species of antelope, and 45 skins of other protected species, in Benin near Togolese border. He was arrested in the act after he arrived at the place of transaction with the contraband carefully concealed in a bedding sheet. More skins were then found during a house search, the total number of skins was 57. He is a long-term trafficker, regularly trafficking skins originating from Nigeria and Togo.



*A trafficker was arrested with 12 skins of sitatunga and 45 skins of other protected species in Benin.*

## Cameroon – LAGA

- 3 traffickers arrested with 4 leopard skins in the West of the country. They arrived to the place of transaction under heavy torrential rain and were arrested during an attempt to sell the skins. One of them attempted to escape when he realized that they were to be arrested but law officials moved swiftly and stopped him. They are regular suppliers of illicit leopard skins in an area that is notorious for leopard skins trafficking.
- The Deputy Director held a meeting with a team of USAID officials who were visiting the country and discussed with them the wildlife law enforcement process and governance issues.
- He was one of several invitees who joined the French to celebrate their National Day at the Residence of the French Ambassador.
- The Deputy Director held a meeting with the Ghana-based US Regional Environment team for West and Central Africa and later held another meeting

the next day with the same team with several other NGOs present. Discussions focused on challenges to effective wildlife conservation initiatives and their solutions.



## Congo – PALF

- 4 ivory traffickers were sentenced to 1.5 years in jail. They were arrested in February with 3 tusks and pangolin scales.
- The Coordinator held a series of meetings with high authorities including the Director of the Cabinet of the Minister of Environment, the General Di-

rector of Water and Forests of the Ministry of Environment, the General Attorney of the Supreme Court, the Legal Adviser and the Wildlife Advisor of the MEF, the Advisors and Attachés of US Embassy, several State Counsels and Department Directors of Water and Forest and others.

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## Gabon – AALF

- The Coordinator held a meeting with the Minister of the Water and Forests to discuss activities of AALF and collaboration, how to improve governance in the Ministry, the opportunity to improve the official agreements between AALF and the Ministry, and preparation of a new project on anti-poaching in an important logging concession.
- The Legal Team met with the Minister of the Water and Forests several times during their work at the port to control timber containers before they are exported. AALF supports the successful attempts of the Ministry to block illegal companies operating in the port and in the field as well.
- Luc Mathot, the Director of Conservation Justice, travelled to Burkina Faso. He held high level meetings with the Minister of Water and Forests, the Chief of Staff at the Presidency of the Republic, the US and European Union Embassies.
- An investigator travelled to Burkina Faso and Benin to support investigations.

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## Togo – EAGLE Togo

- The Legal Team had a working session with the Chief of the Divisions of the Commissariat of Customs and Indirect Rights and three experts accredited to the World Customs Organization (WCO). This working session was organized within the WCO INAMA project, aiming to establish a formal agreement of collaboration between the Togolese Customs and EAGLE-Togo to strengthen the collaboration in fighting the wildlife crime.
- The Head of the Legal department held a meeting with the Director of the Minister of Territorial Administration in Kara to plan an audience by the Minister, to introduce him to EAGLE Togo and its activities.
- He also met with the Chief of Staff of the Presidency to seek his help with obtaining an audience by the Minister of Territorial Administration.

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## Senegal – EAGLE Senegal

- A big cat skin trafficker arrested in the south of the country during an attempt to sell a lion skin, a leopard skin and two crocodile skins. He transported them concealed in a millet bag and a backpack. More contraband was found during the house search in his house, including crocodile and python skins.
- 2 traffickers arrested the same day in the same town with 22 crocodile skins, concealed in the rice bag. They were arrested during an attempt to sell the skins in a restaurant. These two operations have helped to crack a new cross-border trafficking network operating in the south of the country between Senegal, Guinea Bissau, Guinea Conakry and the Gambia.
- The Coordinator held a series of meetings with high authorities including the General Director of the Central Bureau for the Repression of the Ille-





gal Trafficking of Drugs (OCRTIS), The Director of Wildlife, who is also the focal point of CITES in Senegal, the Directorate of Waters, Forests, Hunting and Soil Conservation (DEFCCS), Deputy Director of Criminal Affairs of the Ministry of Justice, the State Counsel and the Commissioner of the Urban Commissariat in Kolda, among others.



## Benin – AALF-B

■ A trafficker arrested with 12 skins of sitatunga, a fully protected species of antelope, and 45 skins of other protected species, near Togolese border. He was arrested in the act after he arrived at the place of transaction with the contraband carefully

concealed in a bedding sheet. More skins were then found during a house search, the total number of skins was 57. He is a long-term trafficker, regularly trafficking skins originating from Nigeria and Togo. Sitatunga is a rare antelope, living in

swamps and wetlands of West and central Africa. Its numbers are rapidly decreasing due to poaching and loss of habitat.

- Three ivory traffickers were prosecuted and sentenced to jail. One of them, an elected local politician, was sentenced to 3 years and two others to 2 years. They were arrested in June with 2 tusks.
- The coordinator trained fifteen officers of the Republican Police in Houeyogbe on the fight against wildlife crime.



- The coordinator held a series of meetings with high officials, including the Legal Affairs Officer of the Kandi Civil Prison in order to ensure a good follow-up of the detainees arrested, the Secretary of the Attorney General and the Registrar of the Cotonou Court of Appeals to discuss the AALF-B project activities, several State Counsels, Commissioners and Departmental Police Directors and others.
- An investigator from Gabon arrived to Benin to support investigations.

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

- A skin trafficker was sentenced to 6 months in jail. He was arrested in January with two leopard and one lion skins, 11 skins of other protected species and elephant and hippo body parts. The trafficker who is also an imam was found in the middle of a transaction with a lion and leopard skin spread out in his shop. Due to the small size of the shop and the fact that he had cobra snakes crawling around in the back, the search was an exciting one for Rens and his team.
- The Legal Team had a working session with the UCT to investigate on the money laundering aspect of the Tran Van Tu case.
- A Legal Adviser participated at a meeting organized by the US Embassy about the reinforcement of the regional security.
- A Legal Adviser held a meeting with the Executive Secretary of the Anti-Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Inter-ministerial Committee of the Ministry of Economy and Finance, to talk about the money laundering aspect in the wildlife trafficking.

## Burkina Faso - EAGLE Burkina Faso

- 4 traffickers arrested with 20 crocodile skins in the capital city, two of them security guards. Three were arrested in the act after they arrived with the contraband, well concealed in bags, to a hotel. They denounced another trafficker, who was arrested the same day.
- 3 ivory traffickers arrested with two tusks in the attempt to sell them. Two of them brought the tusks from the border area of Ghana to the capital city to sell them, but were swiftly arrested instead. They denounced the third trafficker, who was arrested few days later.



4 traffickers arrested with 20 crocodile skins in the capital city

- Luc Mathot, the Director of Conservation Justice, arrived to Burkina Faso. He held high level meetings with the Minister of Water and Forests, the Chief of Staff at the Presidency of the Republic, the US and European Union Embassies.
- 3 investigators continued their test period, which already resulted in a successful operation.
- An investigator from Gabon arrived to Burkina Faso to support investigations.

3 ivory traffickers arrested with two tusks



## Headquarters

- Ofir Drori, the Founding Director, conducted a short mission to Uganda to support the newly establishing team and to train its members.
- Luc Mathot, the Founding Director, travelled to London to participate at a meeting on illegal log-

ging. He also travelled to Burkina Faso. He held high level meetings with the Minister of Water and Forests, the Chief of Staff at the Presidency of the Republic, the US and European Union Embassies.

## 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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