



**EAGLE**

October 2017  
EAGLE Network

# Wildlife Law Enforcement Briefing

- ✓ *39 wildlife traffickers arrested in 6 countries*
- ✓ *4 traffickers including a corrupt custom officer arrested in Ivory Coast with 53 elephant tails and more than 52 kg of ivory, the largest known seizure ever of elephant tails*
- ✓ *2 ape traffickers arrested and a baby chimp rescued in Gabon*
- ✓ *A corrupt Uganda Wildlife Authority ranger arrested with hippo teeth in Uganda*
- ✓ *A former Navy Corporal arrested with 4 tusks in Togo*
- ✓ *18 wildlife traffickers arrested in Gabon, 11 of them ivory traffickers*
- ✓ *6 wildlife traffickers arrested in Cameroon in 3 operations with ivory, pangolin scales and leopard skins.*
- ✓ *2 ivory traffickers arrested with 2 tusks in Benin*



*4 traffickers including a corrupt custom officer were arrested in Ivory Coast with 53 elephant tails and more than 52 kg of ivory.*



*2 traffickers arrested and a 4-month-old baby chimp rescued in Gabon.*

# Summary

39 wildlife traffickers were arrested in 6 countries.

4 traffickers including a corrupt custom officer were arrested in Ivory Coast with 53 elephant tails and more than 52 kg of ivory. This is the largest known seizure ever of elephant tails representing the scale of the massacre by this ivory trafficking ring. These 53 killed elephants are just a snapshot of their ongoing illegal activities. The airport customs officer arrested is another flagrant example of corruption present in all sectors of public service. Money transfers across West Africa are being investigated. During the house searches more ivory objects were found, amongst other contraband from partially protected animals.

2 traffickers arrested and a 4-month-old baby chimp rescued in Gabon. They tried to market the chimp online, clothing the male chimp in a pink dress to attract buyers.



2 traffickers were arrested in Cameroon with 2 leopard skins and pangolin scales.

The first one was arrested in the act after he arrived with the chimp to a court yard of a hotel to sell it. He denounced the owner of the baby chimp, who was immediately arrested as well when he tried to recover his share of the sale. The baby chimp got an immediate care at the International Centre for Medical Research and later was transported to the sanctuary in Lekedi Park for a life time care.

A corrupt Uganda Wildlife Authority ranger arrested with 8 hippo teeth in the West of the country. He stole the hippo teeth from the UWA storage and was arrested in a hotel in the act of selling them. He was already caught doing the same in the past but re-

ceived only a warning from his supervisors. This time he remains behind bars.

An ivory trafficker arrested with 4 tusks in the capital of Togo. The former Corporal at the Togolese Navy was arrested when the taxi, he was using, was stopped and checked by OCTRIDB officers. Being scared he immediately admitted that the ivory was his and he intended to sell it.

18 wildlife traffickers were arrested in Gabon, 11 of them ivory traffickers. 5 ivory traffickers were arrested with 2 tusks in the East of the country. Among them was one Malian and one Cameroonian nationals. 3 ivory traffickers were arrested with 2 tusks and 18 ivory pieces. 3 traffickers arrested with 2 ivory tusks and a leopard skin.

6 wildlife traffickers were arrested in Cameroon in 3 operations with ivory, pangolin scales and leopard



4 traffickers including a corrupt custom officer were arrested in Ivory Coast with 53 elephant tails and more than 52 kg of ivory. Rens Ilgen, the coordinator of EAGLE-Togo, supported the operation.

skins. 2 ivory traffickers arrested with 2 elephant tusks in the capital city. 2 traffickers were arrested with over 50 kg of pangolin scales. They have a long-standing relationship with different networks including a Nigerian who regularly bought and exported pangolin scales. Their activity span across Gabon and Congo and had been going on for a number of years. 2 traffickers were arrested with 2 leopard skins and pangolin scales. One of the traffickers is said to be a traditional notable in an area where the illegal trade in leopard skins is rife. He is suspected to have trafficked over 10 skins a month before his arrest.

# Cameroon – LAGA

- 2 ivory traffickers arrested with 2 elephant tusks in the capital city. One of them is a notorious trafficker, arrested together with the second trafficker

Program of the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The 5-day meeting brought participants from several countries in the Central African sub region, the



2 traffickers arrested with 2 leopard skins and pangolin scales. 2 traffickers arrested with over 50 kg of pangolin scales.

shortly after returning to Yaounde with the ivory, concealed in a plastic bag. He is a taxi driver and uses his own taxi to traffic the contraband. He is connected to a ring of poachers who supply him with ivory.

- 2 traffickers arrested with over 50 kg of pangolin scales. They are experienced traffickers having a long-standing relationship with different networks including a Nigerian who regularly bought and exported pangolin scales. Their activity span across Gabon and Congo and had been going on for a number of years.

- 2 traffickers arrested with 2 leopard skins and pangolin scales. One of the leopard skins was still fresh indicating that the leopard was recently killed. One of the traffickers is said to be a traditional notable in an area where the illegal trade in leopard skins is rife. He is suspected to have trafficked over 10 skins a month before his arrest.

- The Deputy Director participated in the 17th Meeting of Parties to the Congo Basin Forest Partnership where he participated in several meeting sessions and side events. He held discussions with several government and NGO officials on wildlife law enforcement including the Head of the African

European Union and the US.

- A super volunteer, under the EAGLE management recruitment program, continued his training and testing.
- 3 investigators continued their test period.



2 ivory traffickers arrested with 2 elephant tusks

# Congo – PALF

- The coordinator held several meetings with regional authorities, including the Director General of the Forest Economy and the Director of Fauna and Protected Areas to discuss the ongoing legal cases. She also met with several State Counsels, the Departmental Commanders of Gendarmerie and the Departmental Directors of Ministry of Environment.
- She also held a meeting with the Environment Officer of the EU Embassy to discuss the cooperation in fighting wildlife crime.
- Recruitment process continued with 2 legal advisers on test period.
- An investigator from Congo travelled to Ivory Coast to support the project in investigations

# Gabon – AALF



2 traffickers arrested and a 4-month-old baby chimp rescued.

- 2 traffickers arrested and a 4-month-old baby chimp rescued. They tried to market the chimp online, clothing the male chimp in a pink dress to attract buyers. The first one was arrested in the act after he arrived with the chimp to a court yard of a hotel to sell it. He denounced the owner of the baby chimp, who was immediately arrested as well when he tried to recover his share of the sale. The baby chimp got an immediate care at the International Centre for Medical Research and later was transported to the sanctuary in Lekedi Park for a life time care.
- 5 ivory traffickers arrested with 2 tusks in the East of the country. Among them was one Malian and one Cameroonian nationals. They were arrested in the act when they were unloading the ivory from the car, getting ready for selling it.

- 5 leopard skin traffickers arrested in the South-west of the country. Three brothers were arrested in the act trafficking three leopard skins and an elephant tail, later they denounced 2 other traffickers. One was arrested during the night, the other one arrived at the police station to give an explanation of his involvement in the case and ended behind bars as well.



5 ivory traffickers arrested with 2 tusks in the East of the country.



5 leopard skin traffickers arrested in the South-west of the country.

leopard skin. First one was arrested during the attempt to sell the contraband. He immediately denounced two other traffickers, sisters, who supplied the contraband. They were arrested in their home the same day. All three of them are behind bars, awaiting trial.

- The coordinator participated in the 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Parties to the Congo Basin Forest Partnership in Cameroon, where he held a series of meetings



3 traffickers arrested with 2 ivory tusks and a leopard skin.

with representatives of USFWS, WCS, GEF, US Forest Service, FAO, WWF, UNESCO and other international institutions.

- The coordinator travelled to Brussels, Belgium, to meet with EU representatives to discuss cooperation in combating wildlife crime in Africa.
- The legal team held meetings with different Gabonese authorities, including the State Counsels in several regions, the Provincial Directors of Waters and Forests, the Head of Anti-Poaching, the Head of Judicial Police and others.



3 ivory traffickers arrested with 2 tusks and 18 ivory pieces.

- 3 ivory traffickers arrested with 2 tusks and 18 ivory pieces. Two of them were arrested in the act as they attempted to sell the contraband. They denounced third trafficker, who was arrested the same day in his village.

- 3 traffickers arrested with 2 ivory tusks and a

## Republic of Guinea – GALF

- Charlotte Houpline, the WARA director, arrived in Guinea and met with the General Director of the Nature Conservancy and Management Authority, the CITES Focal Point and the National Director of Water and Forests to discuss combating the illegal trade in great apes.
- The Coordinator and the Head of the Legal Department held a meeting with French Custom experts to improve the cooperation in the fight

against fraud in the wildlife trafficking across borders.

- The coordinator held a series of meetings with Guinea authorities including the Focal Point of the fight against wildlife crime of the Ministry of Environment, the General Director of the Corps des Conservateurs de la Nature, the Focal Point of CITES and others.

## Togo – EAGLE Togo



- An ivory trafficker arrested with 4 tusks in the capital of the country. The former Corporal at the Togolese Navy was arrested when the taxi, he was using, was stopped and checked by OCTRIDB officers. Being scared he immediately admitted that the ivory was his and he intended to sell it. He remains behind bars, awaiting trial.
- 2 significant traffickers, arrested in April this year with 783 royal python skins, were sentenced to 2 years in prison. 2 baby turtle traffickers, arrested in March, were sentenced to 6 months in prison.
- Rens Ilgen, the coordinator of EAGLE-Togo, continued his mission to Ivory Coast to continue training, recruitment and coordination of the project.
- The assistant coordinator held a series of meeting with Togolese authorities, including the head of Interpol, the head of OCRTIDB, the head of Forest Police of Ministry of Environment, two Jurists of Ministry of Environment and a judge of the court of first instance of Lomé.



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## Senegal - SALF

- Absence of the coordinator limited the activities of the project. She travelled to France to continue the treatment of her knee, injured during an operation in Guinea in April.
- Intense recruitment process continued with 5 activists starting their test period in the end of October.

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## Benin – AALF-B

- 2 ivory traffickers arrested with 2 tusks in the capital city. They were arrested in the act in a hotel with ivory, concealed in a backpack. They are connected to a wider ring of traffickers, bringing ivory from Burkina Faso. They remain behind bars, awaiting trial.
- Good deterring sentence was achieved when one of the five ivory traffickers, arrested in July with 21 kg of ivory, was sentenced to 5 years in prison. Other three received suspended sentences.
- The coordinator and the legal team held a series of meetings with Benin authorities including the State Counsels and Judges of several courts, the Director of Criminal Affairs of the DCPJ, the Directors of the National Police School and Police Academy, the Director of Judicial Services, the Director of the Customs Service for the fight against fraud, the Head of Cotonou Airport Customs Brigade (ICBG), and others.
- The Deputy Coordinator carried a training of the National Police senior officers at the National Police Academy. 100 participants were trained on environmental regulations and the methods used in combating the illegal wildlife trade.
- Nicolas Charron, the Monitoring and Evaluation officer conducted a mission to Benin to support the investigation department, to train and evaluate new investigators and to improve the management of the project.
- 2 investigators continued their test period.



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## Uganda - EAGLE Uganda

- A corrupt Uganda Wildlife Authority ranger arrested with 8 hippo teeth in the West of the country. He stole the hippo teeth from the UWA storage and was arrested in a hotel in the act of selling them. He was already caught doing the same in the past but received only a warning from his supervisors. This time he remains behind bars.
- 3 traffickers of Kenyan nationality arrested with 2 large tusks, weighing 47 kg. They brought the ivory concealed in a bag on a motorbike from Kenya and tried to sell it in a hotel near the border.
- 2 ivory traffickers arrested in the capital city with 47 kg ivory. One of them is a manager of a res-



*A corrupt Uganda Wildlife Authority ranger arrested with hippo teeth*



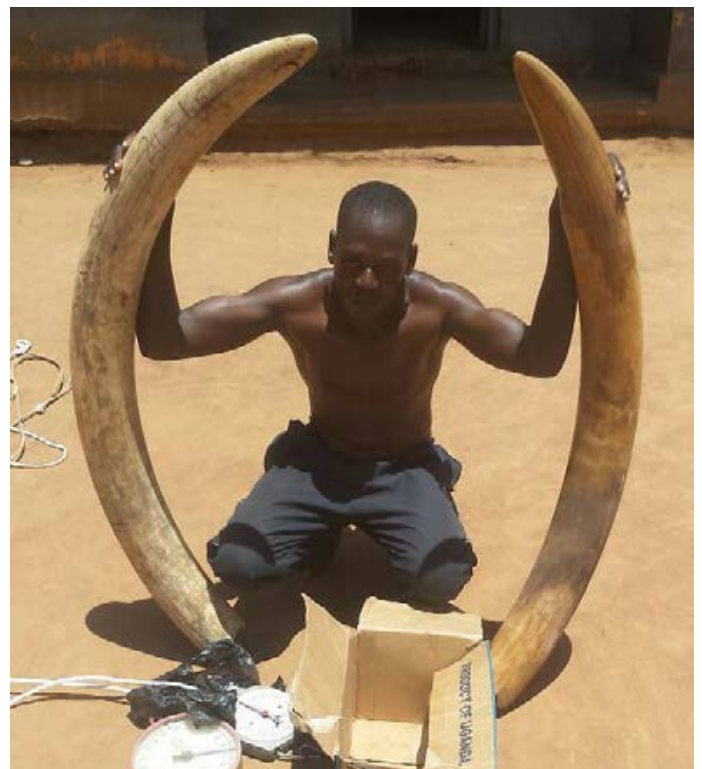
*2 ivory traffickers arrested in the capital city with 47 kg ivory.*

restaurant, where they attempted to carry the illegal deal, while the woman is an office assistant with an NGO, operating in agriculture. Connection to South Sudan and DRC is being investigated.

■ An ivory trafficker with 2 large tusks arrested in the North of the country. He was concealing them in a plastic bag in his house, while looking for a buyer. He remains behind bars.

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

*An ivory trafficker with 2 large tusks arrested*





- An ivory trafficker arrested with 4 pieces of ivory weighing 15 kg in the capital city. He is a business man, connected to a ring of traffickers, bringing ivory from Democratic Republic of Congo.



3 traffickers of Kenyan nationality arrested with 2 large tusks, weighing 47 kg.

## Ivory Coast - EAGLE Ivory Coast

- 4 traffickers including a corrupt custom officer arrested with 53 elephant tails and more than 52 kg of ivory. This is the largest known seizure ever of elephant tails representing the scale of the massacre by this ivory trafficking ring. These 53 killed elephants are just a snapshot of their ongoing illegal activities. The airport customs officer arrested is another flagrant example of corruption present in all sectors of public service. Money transfers across West Africa are being investigated. During the house searches more ivory objects were found, amongst other contraband from partially protected animals.
- Ofir Drori, the founding director of EAGLE Network travelled to Ivory Coast to support the external relations of the project. Together with Rens Ilgen he met with the Minister of Environment, Water Resources & Forests, the Director of Cabinet and the Chargé des Affairs of the US Embassy to discuss and move towards signing the MoU.
- A meeting was held at the Residence of the US Ambassador where Ofir



an Rens were invited to present EAGLE to a variety of government officials, diplomats and NGO's.

- Rens Ilgen, the coordinator of EAGLE-Togo, continued his mission to Ivory Coast to continue training, recruitment and coordination of the project.
- He also held a meeting with the Director of Wildlife and Hunting Resources to progress with the collaboration between MINEF and EAGLE.

- He introduced the project to the Dutch Ambassador and discussed collaboration between EAGLE-Ivory Coast and the Embassy.
- Another meeting was held with the Director of Amnesty International in Ivory Coast to introduce the project and discuss collaboration.
- An investigator from Congo travelled to Ivory Coast to support the project in investigations.

## Headquarters

- Ofir Drori, the founding director of EAGLE Network, presented via video at "The Sixth Extinction Crisis" conference on changing the global dialogue and how to change the status quo in the efforts to save endangered species. The conference, organized by the Society of Environmental Journalists and opened by Jane Goodall, brought together over 600 environmental journalists from all over the world.
- Nicolas Charron, the Monitoring and Evaluation officer, conducted a mission to Benin to support the investigation department, to train and evaluate new investigators and to improve the management of the project.
- Ofir Drori, the founding director of EAGLE Network travelled to Ivory Coast to support the external relations of the project. Together with Rens Ilgen he met with the Minister of Environment, Water Resources & Forests, the Director of Cabinet and the

Chargé des Affairs of the US Embassy to discuss and move towards signing the MoU.

- A meeting was held at the Residence of the US Ambassador where he was invited to present EAGLE to a variety of government officials, diplomats and NGO's.
- Luc Mathot, the Founding Director, attended the 17th Meeting of Parties to the Congo Basin Forest Partnership in Cameroon, where he held a series of meetings with representatives of USFWS, WCS, GEF, US Forest Service, FAO, WWF, UNESCO and other international institutions. The 5-day meeting brought participants from several countries in the Central African sub region, the European Union and the US.
- He also travelled to Brussels, Belgium, to meet with EU representatives to discuss cooperation in combating wildlife crime in Africa.

## 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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