



**EAGLE**

September 2019  
EAGLE Network

# Wildlife Law Enforcement Briefing

- ✓ *13 wildlife traffickers arrested in 4 countries*
- ✓ *5 ivory traffickers, including a son of former Minister of Finance arrested with two large tusks in Cameroon. The tusks weighed 53 kg and measured close to 2 m in length.*
- ✓ *3 ivory traffickers arrested with 12 tusks in two operations in Gabon*
- ✓ *3 ivory traffickers, one of them Nigerian, arrested with 4 tusks in Benin*
- ✓ *2 ivory traffickers arrested with 2 tusks in Côte d'Ivoire*



5 ivory traffickers including a son of former Minister of Finance were arrested with two large tusks in the capital city of Cameroon.

2 ivory traffickers were arrested with 6 ivory tusks in Gabon.

# Summary

13 wildlife traffickers were arrested in 4 countries.

5 ivory traffickers including a son of former Minister of Finance were arrested with two large tusks in the capital city of Cameroon. The ex-minister's son was transporting the tusks, weighing 53 kg and measuring close to 2 m in length, in his car together with the other four traffickers. Right before they intended to offload the contraband, they were swiftly arrested in a police ambush. One of them attempted to escape but was quickly arrested too. The trafficking ring is connected to the syndicate of pangolin scales and ivory traffickers who were arrested in Douala in March 2019. Tusks of this size are rarely seen nowadays as poachers massacre younger and younger elephants for the tusks.



*5 ivory traffickers including a son of former Minister of Finance were arrested with two large tusks in the capital city of Cameroon.*



*2 ivory traffickers were arrested with 6 ivory tusks in Gabon.*

2 ivory traffickers were arrested with 6 ivory tusks in Gabon. They were arrested when they were transporting the ivory, concealed in a suitcase, by car to the place of transaction. They are behind bars awaiting trial, facing a sentence of 10 years in jail according to the new Gabon legislation. An ivory trafficker arrested with 6 tusks at the North of the country. He got the tusks from traffickers operating near Cameroonian border and intended to sell them in the provincial capital but was swiftly arrested in the act.

3 traffickers, one of them Nigerian, arrested with 4

tusks in Benin. They waited until the midnight before they arrived to the place of transaction, with the contraband carefully packed in two jute bags, hoping that late night will serve them as a cover. Instead, they were swiftly arrested and remain behind bars awaiting trial.

2 ivory traffickers arrested with 2 tusks in the capital city of Côte d'Ivoire. One of them a wood carver, the other one an art teacher and former art student, they arrived with the contraband well concealed in a bag into a hotel where they were swiftly arrested. The investigation showed their links to high officials of the country.



*3 traffickers, one of them Nigerian, arrested with 4 tusks in Benin.*

# Cameroon – LAGA

- 5 ivory traffickers including a son of former Minister of Finance arrested with two large tusks in the capital city. The ex-minister's son was transporting the tusks, weighing 53 kg and measuring close to 2 m in length, in his car together with the other four traffickers. Right before they intended to offload the contraband, they were swiftly arrested in a police ambush. One of them attempted to escape but was quickly arrested too. The trafficking ring is connected to the syndicate of pangolin scales and ivory traffickers who were arrested in Douala in March 2019. Tusks of this size are rarely seen nowadays as poachers massacre younger and younger elephants for the tusks.
- The Deputy Director accompanied by the Heads of the Legal and Investigations Departments held a meeting with two INTERPOL Data analysts from Singapore and two criminal investigation officers from the regional office of INTERPOL in Yaoundé.
- The Head of the Legal Department participated at a national workshop to build the capacity of magistrates and other judiciary officials on effective wildlife law enforcement, and to encourage collaboration between the different stakeholders involved in the fight against wildlife crimes. During the workshop, he did a presentation on how to calculate the general and specific damages accruing from court rulings.
- He also participated at an international seminar in Yaoundé on the collection of court decisions and analysis in wildlife crime within central Africa. During this seminar, he did a presentation on the lapses in the wildlife law, the strengths and weaknesses of the monitoring and enforcement mechanism.
- A legal adviser participated at a training workshop for wildlife law enforcement officials of the Northern part of the country. During the training, she did presentations on the drafting of a good wildlife offence statements, calculation of general and specific damages and corruption in the law enforcement process.
- The Media Officer participated at the 2019 Jackson Hole Festival as a pre-judge in the category Short Wildlife Impact Film and volunteered during the entire festival where she carried out many ac-

tivities assisting the organizing team. A short film titled Blood Island, which she selected as the pre-judge, was graded the best among 20 short films presented in the category.

- Danielle Mbui, the Financial Officer conducted a mission to Cameroon to monitor the financial management of the LAGA project.



## Congo – PALF

- The legal team supported the case of a trafficker arrested with a baby chimpanzee. The two-year-old female was in a good condition despite being mistreated by the trafficker as he regularly gave her palm wine so she got severely poisoned. She was handed to Tchimpounga sanctuary for a life-long care.
- The Coordinator held a series of meetings with high authorities including Advisors and Attachés of US Embassy, the Economic Counsel of the Belgium Embassy, the Inspector of the Ministry of Justice, several State Counsels and Department Directors of Water and Forest and others.



## Gabon – AALF

- 2 ivory traffickers arrested with 6 ivory tusks in the capital city. They were arrested when they were transporting the ivory, concealed in a suitcase, by car to the place of transaction. They are behind bars awaiting trial, facing a sentence of 10 years in jail according to the new Gabon legislation.
- An ivory trafficker arrested with 6 tusks at the North of the country. He got the tusks from traffickers operating near Cameroonian border and intended to sell them in the provincial capital but was swiftly arrested in the act.
- The implementation of the new Gabonese legislation is bringing the initial results, as an ivory trafficker arrested in July with 11 tusks was sentenced to two years in jail.
- The Activities Coordinator and the Legal Team held a series of meetings with high officials including the Prosecutor of the Republic, the Director of Economic and Financial Affairs of the PJ and Chief of Staff of the Judicial Police.



*2 ivory traffickers arrested with 6 ivory tusks in the capital city.*

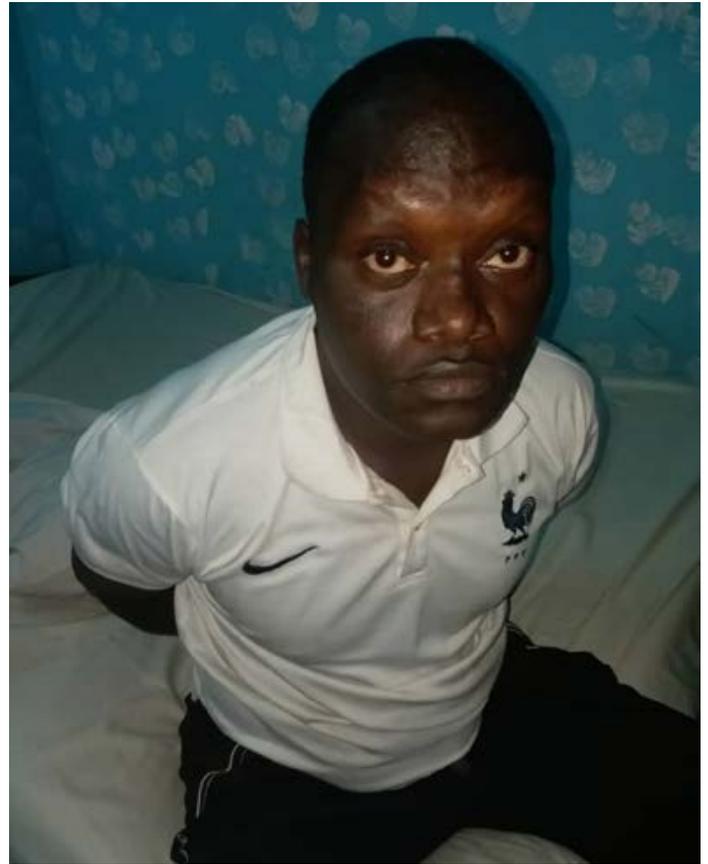


2 ivory traffickers arrested with 6 ivory tusks in the capital city.



An ivory trafficker arrested with 6 tusks at the North of the country.

- The Legal Team held several meetings with high state authorities including several State Counsels, judicial authorities and others.



An ivory trafficker arrested with 6 tusks at the North of the country.

## Togo – EAGLE Togo

- The Head of the Legal Department held a meeting with the representative of the Ministry of the Environment to update him about the case of two ivory traffickers arrested in March this year, and to highlight the importance of his presence at the hearing.
- The recruitment process continued to strengthen the Investigation Department.

## Senegal – EAGLE Senegal

- The Coordinator held a meeting with the Director of Wildlife (DEFC) to discuss and evaluate the collaboration with the Directorate of Waters and Forests, Hunting and Soil Protection and support better governance of wildlife crime cases.
- She also met with the Deputy Director of Criminal Affairs to present the state of wildlife crime cases in Senegal.
- The Coordinator held another meeting with the Head of the Natural Reserves Division of the National Parks Directorate to review the difficulties and the procedure currently under way in the Kolda District Court.
- She also met with the Director of the Central Office for the Suppression of Illegal Traffic in Narcotics (OCRTIS) as a part of the formalization of the collaboration between the General Directorate of the National Police and EAGLE Senegal.
- She held meetings with the Environmental Affairs Officer of the French Embassy in Senegal and the Head of the Internal Security Service (ISS) of the Italian Embassy in Senegal to discuss a collaboration on combating international wildlife trafficking concerning French and Italy.

## Benin – AALF-B

- 3 traffickers, one of them Nigerian, arrested with 4 tusks at the North of the country. They waited until the midnight before they arrived to the place of transaction, with the contraband carefully packed in two jute bags, hoping that late night will serve them as a cover. Instead, they were swiftly arrested and remain behind bars awaiting trial.
- A trafficker arrested in July with a large number of skins of protected species was prosecuted and sentenced to two years in jail.
- The Coordinator and the Legal Team held a series



of meetings with high officials, including the Secretary of the Attorney General of Cotonou, several State Counsels of different courts, Commissioners and Departmental Police Directors and others.

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

- 2 ivory traffickers arrested with 2 tusks in the capital city. One of them a wood carver, the other one an art teacher and former art student, they arrived with the contraband well concealed in a bag into a hotel where they were swiftly arrested. The investigation showed their links to high officials of the country.
- The Legal Team held several meetings with the MINEF lawyer in order to prepare the court hearings, to discuss the case of the ivory traffickers arrested and also to follow up the case of the couple arrested with the 148 kg of pangolin scales.



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## Burkina Faso - EAGLE Burkina Faso

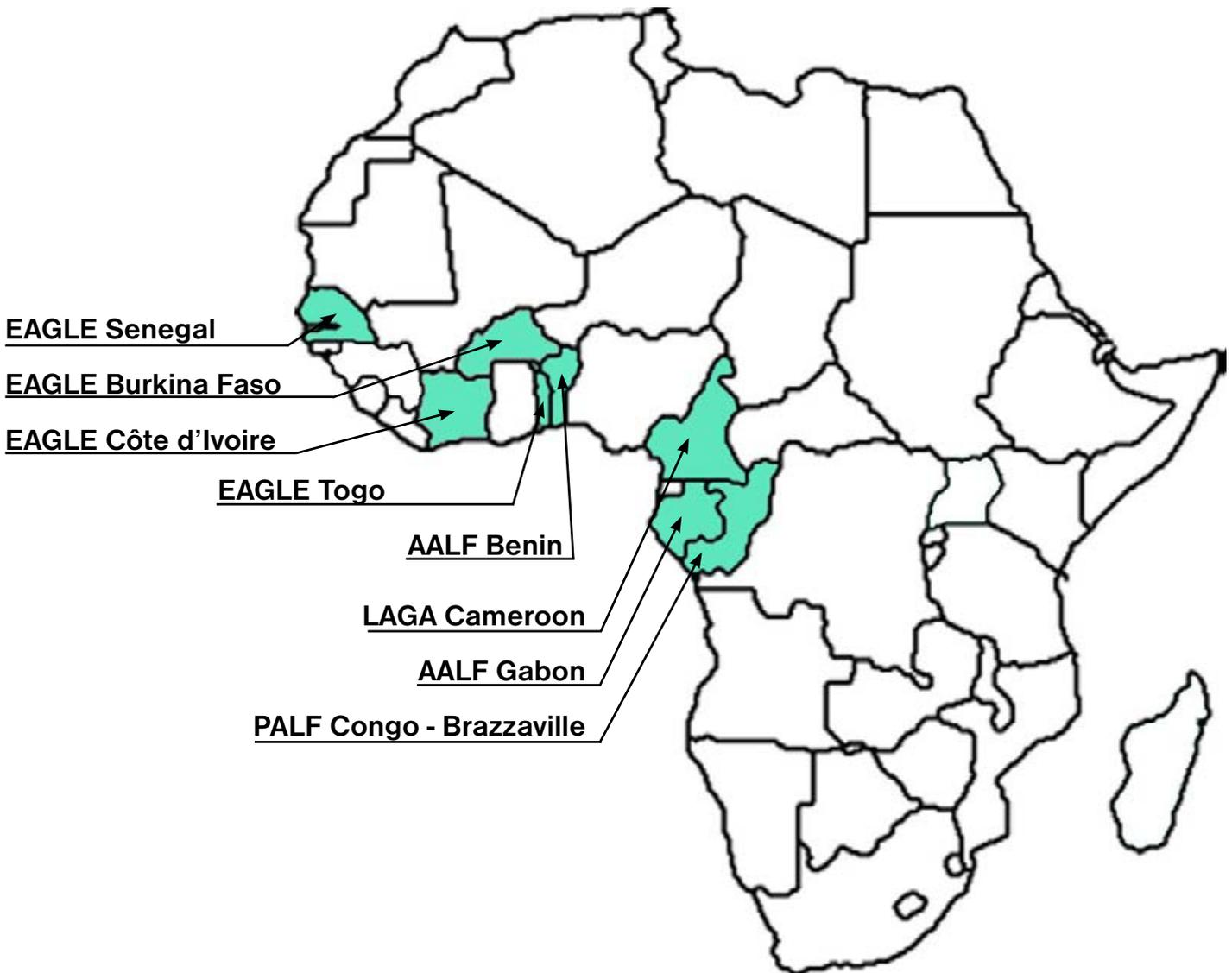
- The Legal Team followed the case of the two traffickers arrested in December 2018 with two lion and three leopard skins. They were released from the custody in January as their case was delayed due to strike of penitentiary staff. The court hearing is scheduled for October.
- The Coordinator held a meeting with the country representative of Conservation Justice in Burkina Faso. They discussed the strategy how to continue external relations concerning the blocked cases in the Directorate of Operations of the Ministry of the Environment.

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## Headquarters

- Ofir Drori conducted a short mission to Uganda to train the new team, evaluate investigators on test, and conduct a training of URA officers on investigations.
- Danielle Mbui, the Financial Officer conducted a mission to Cameroon to monitor the financial management of the LAGA project.

# Structure of the EAGLE Network



## 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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