



EAGLE

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EAGLE Network

Wildlife Law Enforcement Briefing

- ✓ *26 wildlife traffickers arrested in 7 countries*
- ✓ *2 international traffickers arrested in Senegal with 780 carved ivory items and other contraband*
- ✓ *A baby chimp rescued and an ape trafficker arrested in Cameroon*
- ✓ *2 ivory traffickers arrested in Congo with 8 tusks*
- ✓ *11 ivory traffickers arrested in Uganda in 5 different operations*
- ✓ *4 ivory traffickers arrested in 2 different operations in Gabon*
- ✓ *A trafficker arrested in Uganda with a cheetah and leopard skin*



A baby chimp was rescued and a wildlife trafficker arrested in Cameroon. He trafficked the animal concealed in a handbag placed inside a large plastic sack. He was also trafficking 35 kg of pangolin scales.

Summary

26 wildlife traffickers were arrested in 7 countries.

2 international traffickers were arrested in Senegal in two back-to-back operations seizing 780 carved ivory items. Charlotte, the WARA director, led the team in the double-operation with the Senegalese authorities in a dangerous area, and Cecile, the country coordinator, played a crucial role in this crackdown. The traffickers had been also active in Mali, Burkina Faso, Nigeria and Burundi and dealt directly with Chinese nationals. The seizure represents a mere snapshot of their international illegal trading.

A baby chimp was rescued and a wildlife trafficker arrested in Cameroon at a police checkpoint when he trafficked the animal concealed in a handbag placed inside a large plastic sack. He was also trafficking 35 kg of pangolin scales. A taxi carrying the LAGA coordinator of the operation that was on surveillance of the trafficker got into a serious accident just before the arrest. Exemplifying the EAGLE spirit, from the broken vehicle and his head covered by blood, Serge Ania's words to the team were - "Arrest him for me!"

The one-month-old orphaned baby chimpanzee was immediately rushed to the Mefou National Park, where caregivers of the Ape Action Africa quickly provided the appropriate treatment and care.



2 traffickers arrested with a cheetah skin and a leopard skin

2 ivory traffickers were arrested with 8 tusks in Congo, cut to 21 pieces and a corruption attempt towards the gendarmerie was combated. They are well-known repeat offenders, connected to corrupt authorities in the region, and often trafficking ivory across the border from Gabon. They were already arrested for ivory trafficking, but were released illegally by the Pointe-Noire court. Now they remain behind bars, awaiting trial.

11 ivory traffickers were arrested in Uganda in 5 different operations. 5 traffickers, one of them a pastor, were arrested in western Uganda with 10 tusks

in two back-to-back operations. 2 traffickers arrested with 2 tusks in western Uganda. One of them is an English teacher at a primary school, so the traffickers were using the school to conceal the contraband. 2 ivory traffickers arrested in Kampala with 4 tusks. One of them is an owner of a shop and a manager of a lodge, the other one an employee of another lodge. 2 ivory traffickers arrested in Kampala with 2 very large tusks. They were intercepted on the road when transporting the ivory to the place of transaction.

4 ivory traffickers arrested in 2 different operations in Gabon. 3 ivory traffickers were arrested in the capital city. The first two are brothers and were arrested in the act, trying to sell 2 elephant tusks. They admitted to taking ivory from their uncle who works with them. He was arrested two days later. An ivory trafficker, a repeat offender, arrested with 2 large fresh elephant tusks in Franceville. He was previously arrested for ivory trafficking in 2014, while carrying 4 tusks on a train to the capital city, and he spent 6 months in prison. This case points to the necessity of stronger



2 international traffickers were arrested in Senegal and 780 carved ivory items were seized

detering sentences in Gabon, as the current maximum penalty is one of the weakest in Africa.

2 traffickers arrested with a cheetah skin and a leopard skin in Uganda near the Kenya border. They were arrested in the act when they tried to sell the cheetah, leopard and 6 python skins. There are less than 6,800 cheetahs left in the world making it the most endangered feline in the continent. There are less than 30 cheetahs left in Uganda, making this a very meaningful arrest operation.

Multiple arrests this month were of repeat offenders showcasing the need for stronger legislations in some of the countries.

Cameroon – LAGA

■ A baby chimp rescued and a wildlife trafficker arrested in the south of the country at a police checkpoint when he trafficked the animal concealed in a handbag placed inside a large plastic sack. He was also trafficking 35 kg of pangolin scales. He has been trafficking several protected species, including primates, and pangolin scales which he was getting from an organized ring of poachers in the area, across the border in Gabon and Equatorial Guinea. A taxi carrying the LAGA coordinator of the operation that was on surveillance of the trafficker got into a serious accident just before the arrest. Exemplifying the EAGLE spirit, from the broken vehicle and his head covered by blood, Serge Ania's words to the team were - "Arrest him for me!". He is recovering after hospital treatment. The one-month-old orphaned baby chimpanzee was found in a state of trauma and malnourishment and immediately rushed



A baby chimp rescued and a wildlife trafficker arrested in the south of the country. He was also trafficking 35 kg of pangolin scales.

to the Mefou National Park, where caregivers of the Ape Action Africa quickly provided the appropriate treatment and care.

- The Deputy Director travelled to Ivory Coast to continue training and recruitment of new activists for the project.
- LAGA hosted the Peru-based primatologist, Dr. Noga Shanee for a month. She was on a mission to learn and share experiences.
- The recruitment process continued, three investigators and a development officer started their test period.

Congo – PALF

■ 2 ivory traffickers arrested with 8 tusks, cut to 21 pieces and a corruption attempt towards the gendarmerie was combated. They were arrested in an

attempt to sell the ivory, concealed in a suitcase. They are well-known repeat offenders, connected to corrupt authorities in the region, and often traf-



2 ivory traffickers arrested with 8 tusks, cut to 21 pieces

ficking ivory across the border from Gabon. One of them, an owner of a hotel, is in the centre of several trafficking rings, well connected to a network of traffickers. The other one has been transporting the ivory to the place of transaction. They were already arrested for ivory trafficking, but were released illegally by the Pointe-Noire court. Now they remain behind bars, awaiting trial.

- The head of legal department held several meetings with regional authorities, including State Counsel, the Departmental Commander of Gendarmerie and the Departmental Director of Ministry of Environment in Niari, to prepare the operation.
- A legal adviser continued the test period.

Gabon – AALF

- 3 ivory traffickers arrested in the capital city. The first two are brothers and were arrested in the act, trying to sell 2 elephant tusks, cut in 4 pieces. They admitted to taking ivory from their uncle who works with them. He is an elephant poacher. He was arrested two days later.

- An ivory trafficker, a repeat offender, arrested with 2 large fresh elephant tusks in Franceville as he attempted to sell the contraband in a courtyard of a hotel. He was previously arrested for ivory trafficking in 2014, while carrying 4 tusks on a train to the capital city, and he spent 6



An ivory trafficker, a repeat offender, arrested with 2 large fresh elephant tusks



months in prison. This case points to the necessity of stronger deterring sentences in Gabon, as the current maximum penalty is one of the weakest in Africa.

- The Coordinator and the Assistant Coordinator met with the representative of the National Agency of National Parks to discuss the system of payment for the lawyers representing the state at court cases.
- A series of meetings was held by the coordinator and legal team with the Gabonese authorities, including the State Counsels of Franceville, Makokou and Oyem, the Provincial Directors of Water and Forests, the Provincial Heads of the Joint Post of Interior Intelligence and Military security.

3 ivory traffickers arrested with 2 tusks in the capital city

Republic of Guinea – GALF

- A trafficker arrested with a leopard skin and two crocodile skins in Conakry. He was intercepted in a car park, attempting to sell the skins. He has been dealing with cow and sheep skins, using this to cover his illegal business with skins of protected animals, which he was trafficking regularly.
- The coordinator held a series of meetings with Guinea authorities including the Deputy National Director of Judicial Police, the Head and the Focal Point for Wildlife Crime of INTERPOL, the National Director of Water and Forests, the Focal Point for CITES and the State Counsel of Dixinn.



A trafficker arrested with a leopard skin and two crocodile skins in Conakry

Togo – EAGLE Togo

- Political unrest, leading to demonstrations, limited the activities of EAGLE-Togo. External relations came to a standstill too, as many of the officials were not available during this period.
- The coordinator met two legal advisers of the Ministry of Environment to accelerate the process of signing the Memorandum of Understanding between EAGLE-Togo and the Ministry.
- Focus remains on recruitment as two investigators continued test and one new investigator started the test period.
- The coordinator travelled to Ivory Coast to continue training, recruitment and coordination of the project.

Senegal - SALF



2 international traffickers arrested in Dakar in two back-to-back operations seizing 780 carved ivory items

- 2 international traffickers arrested in Dakar in two back-to-back operations seizing 780 carved ivory items. They both were arrested in their shops, where they were selling crafts and art, using it as a cover for their illegal activities. Charlotte, the WARA director, led the team in the double-operation with the Senegalese authorities in a dangerous area, and Cecile, the country coordinator, played a crucial role in this crackdown. The traffickers had been also active in Mali, Burkina Faso, Nigeria and Burundi and dealt directly with Chinese nationals. The seizure represents a mere snapshot of their international illegal trading. More hippo, warthog and lion teeth were also seized.
- They were convicted the same month and sentenced to 3 months and one month imprisonment and almost 10,000 USD in damages. An appeal against the judgment was lodged in an attempt to get a more severe punishment
- The coordinator met with the Legal Adviser and the Technical Adviser of the Minister of the Environment to discuss the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and the pro-



2 international traffickers arrested in Dakar in two back-to-back operations seizing 780 carved ivory items

cess of managing the contraband seized during the arrests in Senegal.

- The coordinator met with the Head of the Multi-purpose Intervention Brigade and the Department of Internal Security of the French Embassy to discuss a training of the SALF team on self defence.
- Meetings were held with the Ministry of the Environment on the establishment of a special wildlife crime brigade within the Ministry which will help SALF presence in ports, airports and railway stations.

Benin – AALF-B



fender to 4 years imprisonment and the other one to 3 years and 4 months imprisonment.

- 3 legal advisors continued their test period.
- The coordinator held a series of meetings with Benin authorities including the State Counsels and Judges of several courts, African Parks Network (APN), the Director of the National Police School and others.

- 2 ivory traffickers arrested with 14 tusks. They were arrested in the act with the contraband concealed in a plastic bag. They used to traffic ivory for many years, supplying surrounding countries including Burkina Faso. One of the traffickers is a repeat offender, already arrested for bushmeat trafficking in 2014.

- They were swiftly prosecuted and sentenced; the repeat of-

2 ivory traffickers arrested with 14 tusks.



Uganda - EAGLE Uganda



2 traffickers arrested with a cheetah skin and a leopard skin



2 ivory traffickers arrested in Kampala with 4 tusks.



A trafficker arrested in western Uganda with 215 hippo teeth

■ 2 traffickers arrested with a cheetah skin and a leopard skin near the Kenya border. They have been trafficking wildlife contraband for several years. The first one was arrested in the act when he tried to sell the cheetah, leopard and 3 python skins. His fellow trafficker was arrested later in his house with 3 more python skins. There are less than 6,800 cheetahs left in the world making it the most endangered feline in the continent. There are less than 30 cheetahs left in Uganda, making this a very meaningful arrest operation.

■ 5 traffickers, one of them a pastor, arrested in western Uganda with 10 tusks in two back-to-back operations. First two traffickers were arrested with 6 tusks when their car was intercepted at a road check. The third one was arrested while waiting for them in a lodge to get his share of the money.



5 traffickers, one of them a pastor, arrested in western Uganda with 10 tusks

Two other traffickers were arrested soon after in a similar manner.

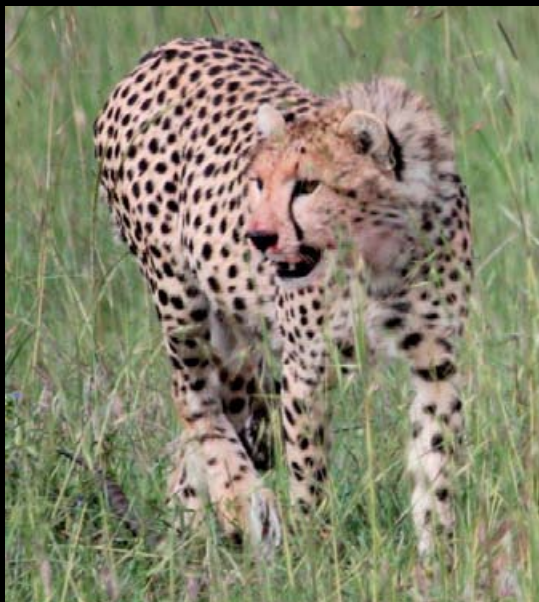
■ A trafficker arrested in western Uganda with 215 hippo teeth on the same day. The team continued straight from last operation to this one clamping down on cross-border trafficking with DRC. The trafficker is connected to an army major already arrested a while back. At least 20 hippos were massacred for this single seizure.



- 2 traffickers arrested with 2 very large tusks in western Uganda. One of them is an English teacher at a primary school, so the traffickers were using the school to conceal the contraband, similarly to the last operation in Ivory Coast. They were arrested at the school where they intended to sell it.
- 2 ivory traffickers arrested in Kampala with 4 tusks. One of them is an owner of a shop and a manager of a lodge, the other one an employee of another lodge. They were arrested in the act when they were trying to sell the contraband concealed in a bag.
- 2 ivory traffickers arrested in Kampala with 2 tusks. They were intercepted on the road when transporting the ivory to the place of transaction.
- Joint meetings were held with EAGLE-Uganda, Uganda Wildlife Authority, Interpol and Flying Squad unit of the Police to harmonize the gap in the investigation of ongoing cases.



2 ivory traffickers arrested in Kampala with 4 tusks.



Cheetahs in wildlife trade

2 traffickers were arrested with a leopard skin and a cheetah skin near Kenya border. It is the third operation this year in Uganda, in which cheetah skins were seized.

There are less than 6,800 cheetahs left in the world making it the most endangered feline in the continent. Not even 30 individuals remain in Uganda. These alarming numbers are making these very meaningful arrest operations.

The number of cheetahs in the wild dropped down from 100,000 in the beginning of the last century to less than 10 % now. Cheetahs once ranged across the entire African continent, except for the Congo Basin, and into Asia from the Arabian Peninsula to eastern India. Today, cheetahs are found in only 23% of their historic range. The main threats present habitat loss, fragmentation and degradation, human-wildlife conflict and illegal wildlife trade.

The cheetah is the world's fastest land animal. Uniquely adapted for speed, the cheetah is capable of reaching speeds greater than 110 kilometers per hour in just over 3 seconds, and at top speed their stride is 7 meters long. The cheetah's unique morphology and physiology allow it to attain the extreme speeds for which it's famous, and is often referred to as the greyhound of cats.

Ivory Coast - EAGLE Ivory Coast

- Rens Ilgen, the EAGLE-Togo coordinator, arrived to Ivory Coast to continue training, recruitment and coordination of the project.
- He met with the Director of wildlife to discuss issues related to wildlife law enforcement and collaboration with EAGLE Ivory Coast.
- He also held a meeting with UCT officials to examine the last operation seizing 3 tons of pangolin scales and sought out problems with their solutions.
- The deputy director of LAGA then arrived to the country and followed Rens in leading the project.
- He also met with UCT officials to discuss further collaboration and assistance.
- He met with two journalists of a TV production to introduce EAGLE Ivory Coast to them while enabling the filming of the 3 tons of pangolin scales stored at the premises of UCT.

Headquarters

- This month was a slow month for the headquarters due to annual leaves and civil unrest in Kenya during the elections.

International Media Coverage

- “Lion and hippo teeth seized in Senegal’s biggest ivory haul” – an article in Reuters about the Senegal arrest operation:

[Link to the article](#)

- Article in Le Quotidien on the arrest of ivory traffickers in Senegal (in French):

[Link to the article](#)

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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