



EAGLE

# Wildlife Law

# Enforcement Briefing

- ✓ **27 traffickers arrested in 6 countries**
- ✓ **The former head of CITES in Guinea - Ansoumane Doumbouya – arrested**
- ✓ **Thierno Barry, a big international trafficker involved in the illegal trade in CITES species arrested**
- ✓ **4 international ivory traffickers arrested in Togo with 8 tusks**
- ✓ **7 traffickers arrested in Uganda with leopard and cheetah skins and other contraband**
- ✓ **2 traffickers arrested in Cameroon with 2 chimp and 2 gorilla skulls and an elephant tooth**
- ✓ **3 traffickers arrested in Benin with 15 sea turtles shells**
- ✓ **3 leopard skins traffickers arrested in Gabon**

## Summary

27 significant traffickers were arrested in 6 countries this month.

On 21st August the former wildlife head and the CITES authority of Guinea - Ansoumane Doumbouya – was arrested by the Interpol NCB, with the assistance of GALF – EAGLE, following an investigation against a wildlife ring involved in large scale wildlife trafficking and corruption. Only three days after the arrest, his brief case was finally opened in front of the prosecutor. The former director held his head as several of empty government export permits were pulled out of his bag. It seems the top public official was a mobile one-stop-shop for all the traffickers' needs. From manatees to parrots and monkeys, illegal trade was carried out of the briefcase. Different reports, including one from the UN CITES secretariat, implicated Ansoumane Doumbouya in illegal exports, but he was still holding a position within the Ministry of Environment as Commander of the national wildlife and forestry mobile enforcement brigade.

Thierno Barry, a big international trafficker involved in the illegal trade in CITES species such as chimpanzees, manatees and other primates, was arrested.



*The former head of the CITES authority of Guinea - Ansoumane Doumbouya – was arrested.*

ted during a preceding operation while attempting to sell Spot-nosed Monkeys and he equally had a fake CITES permit. He exposed a larger international live animals trafficking network spread over 3 continents. 9 traffickers were arrested in Togo, among them 4 significant international ivory traffickers with 8 elephant tusks in the first joint operation by the Gendarmerie Search and Investigation Brigade (SRI) and TALFF. They were regularly trafficking ivory from

Burkina Faso. 7 traffickers were arrested during several operations in Uganda, with leopard skins, cheetah skin, python skins and other contraband.

3 long term leopard skin traffickers were arrested in Gabon, and 3 traffickers with chimpanzee and gorilla skulls elephant parts and pangolin scales in Cameroon. They are experienced wildlife traffickers who have been supplying contraband, especially ivory and giant pangolin scales including to Chinese.

## Cameroon – LAGA

■ 2 significant wildlife traffickers arrested in the East Region with 2 chimp skulls, 2 gorilla skulls, elephant and red river hog teeth. The two are experienced wildlife traffickers who have been supplying contraband, especially ivory and giant pangolin scales to many other traffickers including Chinese. They demonstrated a range of skills reserved for seasoned traffickers with good organisational and planning skills and tricks. Early in the morning of their arrest, they visited the area

reserved for their transaction, made an expert examination of the surroundings, checking escape routes and then left. They later came without the contraband and then did a last round of inspection and left. On coming back for their final move, this time with the contraband, they used an entirely different road and strategically placed an undercover to backup their moves.

■ A wildlife trafficker arrested with giant pangolin scales during a successful operation carried out in the country's capital. Having the scales carefully packaged in a bag, he travelled from the East of the country to Yaounde where he tried to sell them in a popular neighbourhood. This is not his first attempt at selling the scales, as his network of buyers was wide and he travelled frequently over 300 km to Yaounde to supply pangolin scales. In the eastern part of the country the sale of pangolin scales has developed rapidly over the years and it is a thriving illegal business in logging towns

■ Three LAGA members on missions in other countries under the EAGLE Exchange program. LAGA's head of investigations department travelled to Guinea for wildlife law enforcement operational support while an investigator travelled to support Togo and the assistant head of the media and external relations department travelled to Gabon for experience and skill sharing between the two countries.

■ A sea turtle shell trafficker handed a significant 2-year jail term by a court in Buea, the South West. Arrested in April 2015 with 9 sea turtle shells, he was ordered to pay damages worth over 10,000 USD to the government.



*Ape skulls and elephant tooth seized during the arrest*

## Congo – PALF

- The sniffer dog unit identified 90 kg of bushmeat consisting of totally protected animals and 14 live animals (dwarf crocodile, turtles and Spot-nosed Monkey). The animals were released in the area of Lifoula and Mambili river.
- Issuing of a Wanted poster on escaped wildlife criminal, PALF team collaborated with prison officials in issuing this poster to recapture fugitive who fled from hospital
- PALF coordinator and legal adviser participated in the Regional Workshop of Central African States on strengthening border controls in the fight against crime related to wildlife and forests, organized by the UNODC. The coordinator delivered a presentation on “African Experience in the fight against wildlife crime”.
- PALF representatives publically refuse to pay so called “sitting fees” which encourage and remunerate a perpetual planning process to increase donor solidarity against the payment of them – while some donors have recognized the risk involved in promoting this payment-for-services approach, the acknowledgement is not uniform. Sitting fees are one example of the bastardization of mission costs (per diems) - means by which large amounts of money are pocketed without any apparent justification beyond the mere presence of the beneficiaries. It is a means by which imaginary “costs” are transferred into the pockets of individuals which orients activity towards this “perpetual planning process,” instead of orienting activity towards tangible metrics that measure and encourage progress.

## Gabon – AALF

- 3 traffickers, including a driver, arrested with a leopard skin. The driver, known in the region as a notorious trafficker, which carries out trafficking in leopard skins across the entire country, was arrested while attempting to sell the skin. He denounced two more traffickers who were arrested as well.
- The legal department followed up 7 cases, in which 5 criminals were convicted. One trafficker was sentenced to 3 month in prison for trafficking ivory, while another one was sentenced 6 month for the same crime and for illegal hunting.
- AALF team met with the Governor of Ogooué-Lolo, to discuss the community program, conducted through ALEFI, and wildlife aspects, traffic and animal-human conflicts. More meetings were held with Presidents of the courts in Oyem and Koula-moutou and the Prosecutors of five regions to discuss the concrete problems in specific cases with magistrates.

*One of the 3 traffickers arrested with a leopard skin*





In a dirty prison cell in the West African country of Guinea, a well dressed government official has now much time to reflect on memories of representing his country in glamorous UN conventions striving to protect endangered species as elephants and apes from extinction. The man that was responsible for his country's effort to stop wildlife trafficking is now indicted for being a top trafficker himself, playing a key role in a wildlife criminal mafia.

And, apparently, this is not an isolated case. According to the enforcement outfit, the EAGLE Network, assisting the arrest, there are many more top criminals representing countries in UN Conventions, raising questions about traffickers infiltrating the voting on decisions on international law intended to curb wildlife crime.

On 21st August the former wildlife head and the CITES authority of Guinea - Ansoumane Doumbouya - was arrested by the Interpol NCB, with the assistance of GALF - EAGLE, following an investigation against a wildlife ring involved in large scale wildlife trafficking and corruption.

Only three days after the arrest, his brief case was finally opened in front of the prosecutor. The former director held his head as several of empty government export permits were pulled out of his bag. It seems the top public official was a mobile one-stop-shop for all the traffickers' needs. From manatees to parrots and monkeys, illegal trade was carried out of the briefcase. A UN CITES mission to Guinea in 2011 found that 69 chimpanzees had left the country in 2010 alone, all destined for Chinese zoos or safari parks. Investigations led by NGOs and private individuals have revealed that as many as 138 chimpanzees and 10 gorillas have been exported via travel routes established by Chinese development companies.

Ansoumane Doumbouya is considered to have brought Guinea to be suspended from this UN Convention. This shameful status damaging the country's international prestige has been kept for the past two years as suspicions for continued complicity and fraud continue to taint Guinea's reliability.



*Link to a video with statement from Thierno Barry, the international trafficker, hidden footage*

## Guinea – Conakry – GALF

- On 21st August the former wildlife head and the CITES authority of Guinea - Ansoumane Doumbouya - was arrested by the Interpol NCB, with the assistance of GALF - EAGLE, following an investigation against a wildlife ring involved in large scale wildlife trafficking and corruption. Only three days after the arrest, his brief case was finally opened in front of the prosecutor. The former director held his head as several of empty government export permits were pulled out of his bag. It seems the top public official was a mobile one-stop-shop for all the traffickers' needs. From manatees to parrots and monkeys, illegal trade was carried out of the briefcase. Different reports, including one from the UN CITES secretariat, implicated Ansou-
- mane Doumbouya in illegal exports, but he was still holding a position within the Ministry of Environment as Commander of the national wildlife and forestry mobile enforcement brigade.
- Thierno Barry, a large international trader involved in the illegal trade in CITES species such as manatees, chimpanzees and other primates, was arrested red handed during a preceding operation while attempting to sell Spot-nosed Monkeys and a CITES permit. He exposed a larger international live animals trafficking network spread over 3 continents.
- Both the criminals are behind bars facing justice and will have to answer to charges leveled by the prosecution.

- The two monkeys were checked and later released back to the wild in Ziama Strict Natural Reserve during a joint mission of GALF and the Ministry of Environment.
- Doumbouya's arrest caught the attention of local and international press with publications in the New York Times, the UK's Express and also

published by conservation bodies GRASP, UNEP, WWF and others.

- The head of LAGA – Cameroon investigation department arrived to Guinea within the EAGLE exchange program to support the legal team in the post-arrest investigations.

## Togo – TALFF

- 4 ivory traffickers arrested with 8 elephant tusks in Lomé during the first joint operation by the Search and Investigation Brigade (SRI) and TALFF. The traffickers of different nationalities, admitted that they often trafficked ivory internationally; they obtained the ivory in the countryside of Burkina Faso at least on three different occasions.
- 2 traffickers arrested with 26 tortoises in a joint operation with Judicial Police in Lomé.
- 2 traffickers arrested with 4 shells of marine turtles, a totally protected species in Togo, in a joint operation with Judicial Police. The two Togolese were arrested red-handed during an attempt to sell the shells.
- A trafficker arrested with 3 python skins, 4 tortoise

shells and 2 baboon heads in a joint operation with Judicial Police.

- Meeting with seven different authorities and international community members were held to establish or maintain relationships, like the Procurator at Lomé, the Commissioner of the l'Office Central de Répression du Trafic Illicite des Drogues et du Blanchissement (OCRTIDB); the Commissioner in charge of Interpol, US Embassy, the Embassy of France, the European Union, the Ministry of Environment, the investigating judge in Oyem among others.
- An investigator from Cameroon travelled to Togo within the EAGLE Network exchange programme to support TALFF team and to share the experiences with the investigators.



2 traffickers arrested with 4 shells of marine turtles, a totally protected species in Togo,



A trafficker arrested with python skins, tortoise shells and baboon heads

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## C.A.R – RALF

- RALF project is frozen due to security problems in the country, no real activity was undertaken. This situation may continue for the next few months.

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## SENEGAL - SALF

- The coordinator of SALF traveled to Guinea-Conakry to support and ensure preparations for a major arrest operation.
- The investigations department was reinforced this month
- Two new legal advisors put on test and held meetings with the judiciary.
- SALF continued to strengthen the cooperation with government. A meeting with the CITES focal point was held to improve collaboration and awareness on the seriousness of wildlife crime and stricter law enforcement regarding fully protected species.

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## Benin – AALF-B

- 3 traffickers arrested with 15 shells of Olive Ridley Turtle, a highly endangered and fully protected species. The traffickers were caught red handed while they were trying to sell the shells, operation was carried in cooperation of the Judicial Police, and the Waters and Forests Ministry with AALF-Benin. The traffickers remain behind bars and will be prosecuted according to Benin law.
- 3 court cases followed by the legal department. In one of them a former eco-guard of CENAGREF was sentenced 18 month imprisonment and ordered to pay a penalty of 13,000 USD for slaughtering an elephant and its baby for ivory.
- AALF-B carried a meeting with the Minister of Justice, his assistant and the Deputy Secretary of the Ministry, where AALF-B project and its goals were presented directly to the Minister of Justice.
- AALF-B Coordinator met with the Natural Resources Technical Advisor (CTRN) of the Ministry of the Environment to exchange ideas and discuss the collaboration agreement, which was introduced to the Ministry last year and he promised working towards establishing a special chamber at the Beninese courts for natural resource cases.



*3 traffickers arrested with 15 shells of sea Turtle*

# Uganda - EAGLE Uganda

- A trafficker arrested with one cheetah skin, antelope horns, serval skins, python skin and other contraband. The trafficker is a business woman, dealing in crafts. She was prosecuted and sentenced one and half year in prison and penalty of 280 USD. EAGLE Uganda appealed against the sentence as according to the law the penalty must not be smaller than the value of the contraband.
- Another craft dealer was arrested during an attempt to sell 5 kg of pangolin scales, 3 serval skins and Sitatunga horns. He was arrested during an operation on his shop in Kampala. He was released on bail, while his trial continues.
- An ivory trafficker was arrested in a joint operation carried out by Uganda Wildlife Authority and EAGLE Uganda team. He was trying to sell 3 kg of ivory.
- 4 traffickers were arrested with a leopard skin, a python skin, a hyena skin and other contraband of protected wildlife, of total value of almost 9,000 USD. However, the 2 other members of the criminal network were not arrested as they were given warning by a policeman, and escaped. The case was brought to the attention of the policeman's supervisor and removal of the corrupted policeman from the future operation was requested.
- 2 court cases were followed, one case mentioned above, in the other a trafficker in antelope horns and skin was sentenced to one year imprisonment or paying a penalty of 150 USD.
- The coordinator made a presentation to wildlife crime prosecution and investigator from Uganda Wildlife Authority and the Directorate of Public Prosecution Uganda on the EAGLE Uganda operations and investigation procedures. All legal advisers attended the training.
- A member of the EAGLE Uganda team represented EAGLE Uganda in a meeting with the American embassy officers to share information on the success stories of the team.
- Perrine Odier, the Replication Assistant arrived to Uganda within the EAGLE Network exchange program to help with strengthening investigations department, training the team, ensuring application of procedures, working in External Relations with Coordinator and improving communication of coordinator with the Network.



*4 traffickers arrested with a leopard skin, a python skin and other contraband*



*An ivory trafficker was arrested with 3 kg of ivory.*

# Headquarters

- Perrine Odier, replication assistant arrived from Benin to support the work of CCU and to get ready for missions in Uganda and Togo.
- Perrine arrived to Uganda within the EAGLE Network exchange program to help with strengthening investigations department, training the team, ensuring application of procedures, working in External Relations with Coordinator and improving communication of coordinator with the Network.
- EAGLE Training Modules have been revised and improved
- CCU continues to search for the Network Financial Officer.
- More attention was given to coordination of the EAGLE Network Exchange program, the result is growing number of training missions within the network.
- The Doumbouya arrest showed the value of investment in an investigation back-office and CCU involvement in investigation. A separate case study will be published on the capabilities of an international bank of covers, coordinated long term investigation, and real-time response during arrest and interrogation analyzing information promptly to assist decision making in the field.

# International Media Coverage

The arrest of the former head of CITES authority of Guinea - Ansoumane Doumbouya – called a lot of attention in international media and organizations:

[New York Times](#)

[ABC News](#)

[Expres](#)

[Mongabay](#)

[GRASP UNEP](#)

[HETQ Armenia](#)

[WWF](#)

[CITES Secretariat](#)

## 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 eight 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: investi-*

*gations, 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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